

# Arcana™

REVISED EDITION

RULES OF PLAY



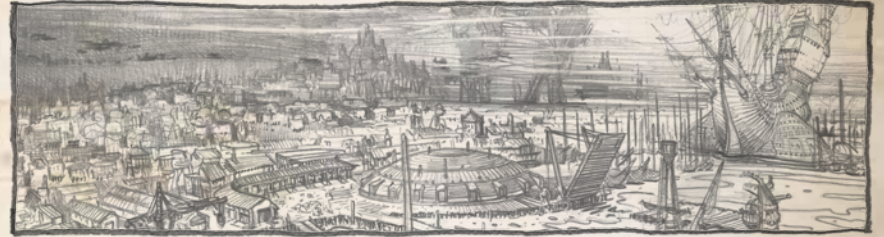


# Arcana

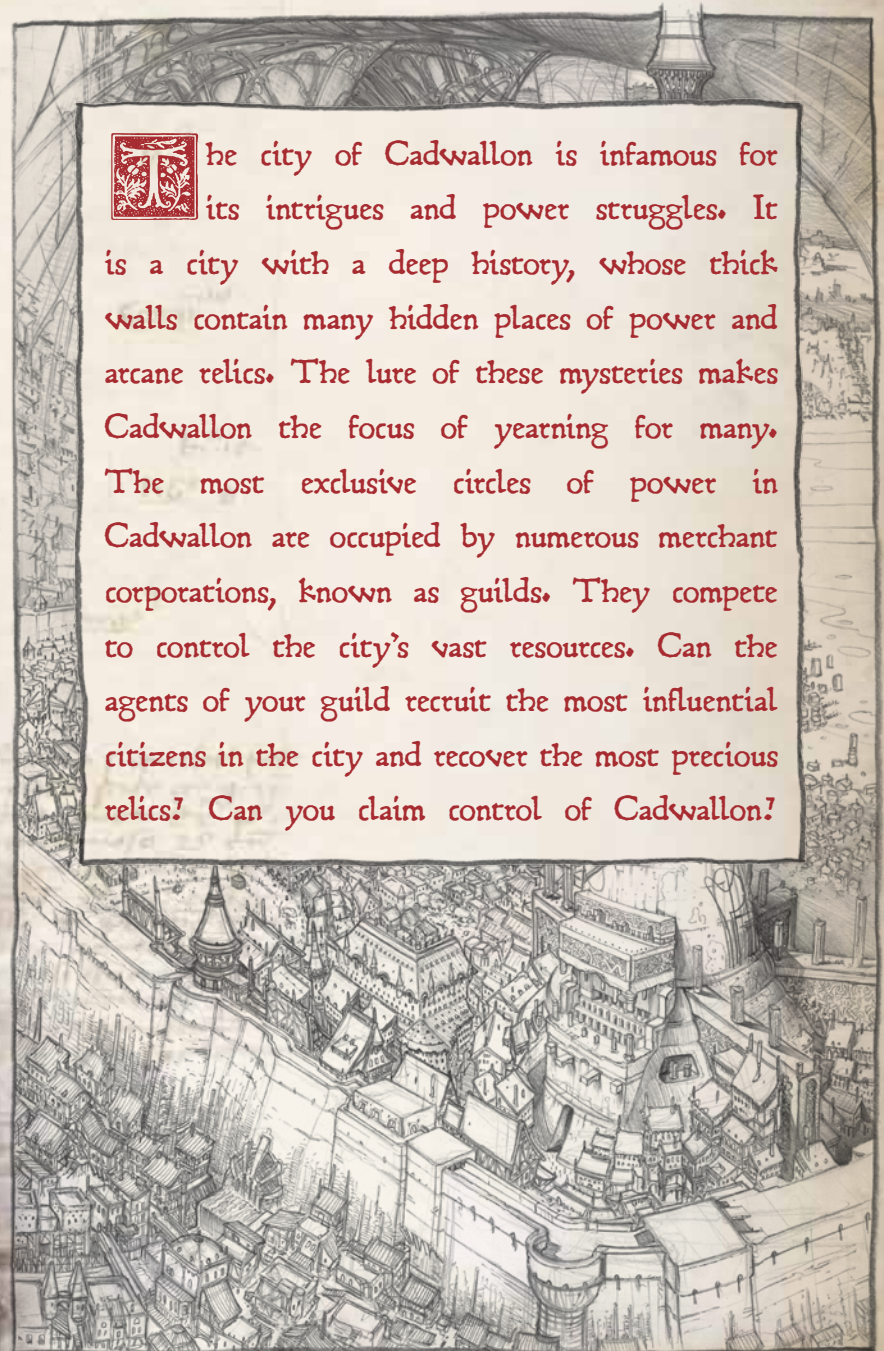
REVISED EDITION

A GAME BY  
DAMIEN DESNOUS

Ages: 13 and up  
Playtime: 60 minutes  
Number of players: 2 to 4



The city of Cadwallon is infamous for its intrigues and power struggles. It is a city with a deep history, whose thick walls contain many hidden places of power and arcane relics. The lure of these mysteries makes Cadwallon the focus of yearning for many. The most exclusive circles of power in Cadwallon are occupied by numerous merchant corporations, known as guilds. They compete to control the city's vast resources. Can the agents of your guild recruit the most influential citizens in the city and recover the most precious relics? Can you claim control of Cadwallon?



## THE OBJECTIVE

In *Arcana*, each player is the leader of one of the guilds of Cadwallon. A player's guild is represented in the game by his own unique deck of cards.

Each guild must rely on a group of agents to secure the good graces of the city's most influential personalities. These agents can also be sent to recover precious relics and take control of key locations in the city. These cards are then added to the player's deck, expanding and increasing the power of his guild.

Guilds collect resources, represented by the victory point value of all cards in a player's deck. When the Ducal Jubilee begins, the guild with the most powerful and valuable resources will take control of the city and win the game!



## The Guilds of Cadwallon

The guilds of Cadwallon were all created for the same reason – to control and run the different “industries” found in the city:



**The Guild of Blades** claims to have been established by the same mercenaries who founded the city of Cadwallon. Its shops are the only ones given the privilege to sell weapons.



The heart and soul of organized crime, the **Guild of Thieves** regulates smuggling, burglaries, and other acts of larceny.



**The Guild of Usurers** runs the city's underground. It controls any criminal activity not associated with the Guild of Thieves.



All transportation is under the control of the **Guild of Ferrymen** – shipowners, cart-drivers, coachmen, caravan drivers...and the assassins who left the Guild of Thieves because of financial disagreements.



**The Guild of Fortune-tellers** gathers fortune-tellers, illuminators, heraldists, clairvoyants, astrologers, and the famous tarot-mages, whose sorceries come from enchanted cards.



**The Guild of Architects** has the privilege to work stone, glass, and metal in Cadwallon. Thanks to its passion for secrets, it has attracted engineers and those initiated into the mysteries of steam and naphtha.

# CONTENTS

This game box contains:

- 6 Guild Crest cards representing the 6 guilds
- 120 Guild cards, including:
  - 14 Agents, 3 Locations, and 3 Relics belonging to the Guild of Blades,
  - 14 Agents, 3 Locations, and 3 Relics belonging to the Guild of Thieves,
  - 14 Agents, 3 Locations, and 3 Relics belonging to the Guild of Usurers,
  - 14 Agents, 3 Locations, and 3 Relics belonging to the Guild of Ferrymen,
  - 14 Agents, 3 Locations, and 3 Relics belonging to the Guild of Fortune-tellers.
  - 14 Agents, 3 Locations, and 3 Relics belonging to the Guild of Architects.
- 116 Stake cards, including:
  - 31 Relics,
  - 36 Locations,
  - 49 Personalities
- 1 First Player card
- 1 Ducal Jubilee card
- 6 Militia cards (see “Optional Rules” on page 16), including:
  - 2 Captains,
  - 4 Soldiers
- 18 Guild Master cards (see “Optional Rules” on page 16)
- 24 Objective cards (see “Optional Rules” on page 16)
- 12 Random Event cards (see “Optional Rules” on page 17)
- This rulebook

## The Cards

Arcana is played with the following types of cards:

### Guild Cards

Agent



Relic



Location



Back



Guild Crest Card



Back

Guild Master Card



Stake Cards

Personality



Relic



Other Cards

Objective



Back



Back



Location



Event



Back



Militia Cards

Soldier



Captain



Back



First Player Card



Ducal Jubilee Card




## 6 SETUP

If this is your first game, set aside the Militia, Guild Master, Objective, and Event cards (all cards not marked with the letter “A” in the lower-left corner). These cards are described in the Optional Rules on page 13.

Each player chooses a guild and takes the 11 cards from that guild marked with the letter “A” in the lower-left corner. The other cards (marked with the letter “B”) are set aside and are not used in this game. They are only used with the Optional Rules. Each player places the Guild Crest card for his guild in front of him.

If the players cannot agree on which Guild to player, distribute them randomly among the players.

Each player shuffles his 11 Guild cards and places them facedown in a pile to the right of his Guild Crest card. This is the player’s Deck. To the left of the player’s Guild Crest card is his Discard Pile.

Shuffle the Stake cards (all cards with a  icon in the upper-left corner) and place them facedown in piles of 12 cards (called “Districts”) in the center of the table. The number of piles depends on the number of players – see the diagrams to the right. Any remaining Stake cards go back into the box and are not used in this game.

Shuffle the “Ducal Jubilee” event card with the bottom five cards of the central pile of Stake cards (called the “Neutral District”). Then, flip the top card of each Stake pile faceup.

Each pile of Stake cards represents a different District in the city of Cadwallon. Each guild has two “Friendly Districts” (which it may share with another guild, depending on the number of players). In the center of the table is a single “Neutral District.” All other Districts in play are considered “Enemy Districts” for that guild.

Randomly determine the first player and give him the “First Player” card.



## Setup of a two-player game



## Setup of a three-player game



### Setup of a four-player game



### THE ARCANA OF POWER

In Cadwallon, there are four Arcana (Areas) of Power. They are represented by these symbols on the cards:



Political power is indicated by the **Staff** because the most powerful people in the city have sceptres, magical staves, etc;



Military power is indicated by the **Sword** because this weapon is a privilege of the Cadwallon nobility;



Spiritual power is indicated by the **Cup** because the initiation rituals to a cult require sipping a bit of holy drink;



Financial power is indicated by the **Ducat**, the official currency of Cadwallon, because in the City of Thieves everything can be bought.

One of these values is displayed in a yellow circle on each Stake card. This represents the Stake card's "Main Arcanum."

### Anatomy of a Card



## THE GAME ROUND

*Arcana* is played over a series of game rounds. During each round, players take turns sending their guild's Agents to Districts in order to take control of Stakes. After all cards in each player's hand have been played, players determine who wins the Stake card in each District of the city.

At the beginning of each round, **each player draws the top four cards from his Deck**. If there are not enough cards, he draws all of them, then shuffles his Discard Pile and creates a new Deck. He then continues to draw until he has four cards in hand.

Each round is divided into two phases: the Intrigue Phase and the Resolution Phase.

### The Intrigue Phase

During the Intrigue Phase, players take turns performing actions. The first player takes the first turn, followed by the other players in clockwise order.

During a player's turn, he **must** perform one of these actions:

- Assign one Agent card from his hand **faceup** to any one Enemy District or the Neutral District;
- Assign one Agent card from his hand **facedown** to any one Friendly District;
- Play one Location card from his hand (see "Location Cards" on page 10). After the card's effect has been resolved, the card goes to the player's Discard Pile;
- Place one Relic on one of his Agents to bribe a Personality card (see "Relic Cards" on page 10); **or**
- Discard one card from his hand to his Discard Pile without applying any effects.

**Note:** To indicate which cards belong to which player when played in a District, orient the card so it faces you (see the diagram to the right).



After the player completes his action, it is the next player's turn to perform one action. Players continue taking turns performing actions until all players have played all four cards from their hands. Then the Intrigue Phase ends.

### SPECIAL CASES:

- If an action (such as playing a Location card or bribing a Personality) allows a player to immediately win a Stake card during the Intrigue Phase, flip over the next Stake card in that District pile. There should always be one Stake card faceup at each District.
- If a played Agent is moved to another District, the card is played faceup or facedown as if it was played directly from the hand (i.e., if a card is moved to an Enemy District, it is turned faceup).

### The Resolution Phase

Once all players have played all the cards from their hand, it is time to resolve the power struggle in each District. Districts are resolved one at a time, with the first player choosing the order of resolution. For each District, one player could win the top Stake card and add it to his Deck as follows...

Each Stake card has one Main Arcanum (the number displayed in the yellow circle). Each Agent has an Arcana value for Staffs, Swords, and Cups. Only the Agent's Arcanum that matches the Stake card's Main Arcanum is used.

To resolve a District, each player adds up the matching Arcanum for all of his Agents assigned to that District:

- If only one player's Arcana total is higher than or equal to the Stake card's Main Arcanum, he wins the Stake card and places it on his Discard Pile. All other cards in the District are sent to their respective Discard Piles;
- If more than one player has a total Arcana higher than or equal to the Main Arcanum, the player with the highest total wins the Stake card and places it on his Discard Pile. All other cards in the District are sent to their respective Discard Piles;
- If the total Arcana value of each player is less than the Stake card's Main Arcanum, nobody wins that card this round. All cards in the District stay faceup; **or**



## Example: Resolving a District

*"Listen, merchant! If you don't want my friend the necromancer to haunt your dreams, you'd better sell me this Barhan sword for a good price."*



Guild of Ferrymen

Stake Card

Guild of Usurers

During the Resolution Phase, players determine who wins each Stake. Here the Stake is a "Barhan Sword". The Main Arcanum is Swords, with a value of 4. The Guild of Ferrymen has a total of 5 Swords (3 for "Crossbowman" + 2 from "Funeral"). The Guild of Usurers only has 3 Swords (from "Pale").

The Guild of Ferrymen player takes the "Barhan Sword" and places it on his Discard Pile, along with his two Agents. The Guild of Usurers player must do the same with her Agent card because the Stake card has been won.

Note that if "Crossbowman" was not present, neither guild would have enough Swords (2 and 3), so the "Barhan Sword" and both Agents would remain in the District.

- If there is a tie for the highest Arcanum total, the Stake card stays where it is unless another card says otherwise. All cards remain in that District until the next round (see example below).

Some cards, such as Guild Crest cards, give a player the ability to win a Stake card when there is a tie. If two or more players have such a card that affects a District, they cancel each other and the District remains a tie. All cards remain in the District until the next round.

**Example:** The Guild of Ferrymen wins ties when the Main Arcanum is Staffs (see its Guild Crest card). The Guild of Thieves wins ties when the Stake card is a Relic. If these two guilds tie for control of a Relic with Staffs as its Main Arcanum, these two abilities cancel each other. The result is still a tie and the Stake card and all cards remain in the District until the next round.

## SPECIAL CASES:

- The Sword, Staff, and Cup values on Relic cards are only used when that card is on top of a District pile. Once a player gains the Relic card (and plays it from his hand), only its Ducat value is used (see "Relic Cards" on page 10).
- The Arcana values on a Location card are only used when that card is on top of a District pile. Once a player gains the Location card (and plays it from his hand), only the card's ability is used (see "Location Cards" on page 10).
- The Ducat value on a Personality card is only used when that card is on top of a District pile to bribe a Personality (see "Bribing a Personality" on page 10). Once a player gains the Personality card (and plays it from his hand), the Personality is treated in all ways as an Agent card, and the Ducat value has no further effect on play (see "Personality Cards" on page 10).

## The End of the Round

The Resolution Phase is complete after all Districts have been resolved. The players then prepare for the next round.

Flip over the top card of any District that does not have a faceup Stake card. If there are no more Stake cards in a District, it remains empty for the rest of the game (the players compete over fewer Stakes).

The first player hands the "First Player" card to the player to his left.

Now the next round begins.



## THE STAKES

There are three types of Stake cards (Personality, Location, and Relic) indicated by these symbols:



Personality



Location



Relic

Any time a player wins a Stake card, it is placed on top of his Discard Pile. After he reshuffles his Deck, he will be able to play these cards when he draws them into his hand.

### Personality Cards

Personality cards represent powerful and important people in Cadwallon. All personality cards in a player's Deck are considered Agents (see "The Intrigue Phase" on page 8).

When a player wins a Personality card and adds it to his Deck, he can later play that card as an Agent to try to win Stakes. Most Personalities have far better Arcana values than the Agents a player has at the beginning of the game.

Most Personality cards have a Ducat value. This Arcanum is **only** used when a guild attempts to bribe that Personality (see "Relic Cards" to the right). After a player wins a Personality card, the card becomes an Agent of his guild and the Ducat value has no further effect on play.

#### SPECIAL CASE:

If a Personality card has more than one Main Arcanum value, the player who has the highest value in **any** of the Main Arcana wins the Stake, as long as that player has at least the minimum value needed.

### Location Cards

Location cards represent important and mystical places within the city. A guild that controls one of these sites can use its influence and power to great effect.

When a Location card is played from a player's hand, it takes effect immediately. The player executes the ability written on the Location card. The Location card is then discarded.

**Example:** The Guild of Blades plays the Repentants House from his hand. It instructs him to draw the top two cards from his Deck, choose one to play immediately, and place the other on his Discard Pile. The Repentants House also goes to his Discard Pile.

The Arcana values on a Location card have no effect when it is played from a player's hand. These values are only used when it is a Stake card. A Location card **cannot** be assigned to a District.

### Relic Cards

Relic cards represent valuable artifacts hidden in Cadwallon. These precious items can often sway an important individual to join a guild's cause.

A Relic card can be used to bribe a Personality. A Relic can only be played on a player's Agent who is already assigned to the same District as a Personality Stake card. If an Agent is facedown, it is then turned faceup. The Ducat value of the Relic is added to the Agent's Arcana value that matches the Main Arcanum of the Stake card (the number displayed in a **yellow circle**):

- If the total is higher than or equal to the Personality card's Ducat value, the Stake is **immediately won**. The Relic and all other cards assigned to that District are placed in the Discard Pile, and a new Stake card is turned faceup at that District.
- If the total is less than the Personality card's Ducat value, nothing happens. The Relic and all cards assigned to that District remain there and can be combined with another Relic or Agent on a future turn to bribe the Personality card.

#### SPECIAL CASES:

- It is not possible to bribe a Relic or a Location card.
- It is possible to use a Relic with multiple Agents at the same District. The total value of the bribe is calculated by adding together the Agents' matching Arcanum values and the Relic's Ducat value.
- If the Ducat value on a Personality card shows a "-" sign, that Personality cannot be bribed.

## Example: Bribing a Personality

"Dame Ayane, please accept this Barhan sword, which is as sharp as your talent. The master of Ferrymen would love to meet you to entrust you with a mission."



Guild of Ferrymen

Stake Card

Guild of Usurers

The Guild of Ferrymen and the Guild of Usurers are competing for Ayane. On previous turns, the Guild of Ferrymen's player placed "Merchant of the Kraken" and "Funeral" next to that Stake card.

On this turn, he plays "Barhan Sword" on "Funeral" to attempt to bribe Ayane. He adds the Arcanum value of all Agents that matches "Ayane's" Main Arcanum (in this case the Sword) to the Ducat value of the Barhan Sword. This gives a total of 7 (1 from the "Merchant of the Kraken" + 2 from "Funeral" + 4 from the "Barhan Sword"). This is equal to the Ducat value of Ayane (7).

The Guild of Ferrymen's player has won the Stake and immediately moves "Ayane" to his Discard Pile, along with his two Agents and the "Barhan Sword." The Guild of Usurers player must also discard "Pâle" and the next Stake card in that District is turned faceup.

## The Harlequin

"The mood of the Harlequin changes as fast as the price of bread. You can never know if he'll speak to you or laugh at you for no reason."



### Winning the Harlequin:

The "Harlequin" can be won using any type of Arcana. But each guild can only count one type of Arcana. The highest total Arcanum value wins the Harlequin.



Guild of Treasurers

Stake Card

Guild of Usurers

**Example:** The Stake is the "Harlequin." Each player must announce his highest matching Arcana total (Staff, Sword, or Cup):

- The Guild of Ferrymen has a total of 5 Cups (3 for "Funeral" + 2 for the "Merchant of the Kraken").
- The Guild of Usurers has a total of 6 Staves (thanks to the "Great Treasurer").

The Guild of Usurers has the highest total Arcana value and wins the "Harlequin" Stake card.

### Using the Harlequin:

The "Harlequin's" Arcana values match the values of any other Agent in the same District. When the District is resolved, the player who owns the "Harlequin" chooses one other Agent in that District. The Harlequin's Arcana values are equal to that Agent's Arcana.

**Example:** The Stake has Cups for the Main Arcanum. The "Harlequin" and the "Necromancer" have been played by the Guild of Usurers and the Guild of Blades has played the "Quarterstaffer". During the Resolution Phase, the Guild of Usurers player chooses the "Necromancer" for the "Harlequin" to match. The "Harlequin" now has a Cups value of 3, matching the "Necromancer's" Cups value.



## THE END OF THE GAME

When the “Ducal Jubilee” card appears at the Neutral District, the players play one final round. The “Ducal Jubilee” card remains in place, and the players have just one more chance to try to win the last visible Stake cards.

After the final round, each player adds the victory point value of all cards in his Deck and in his Discard Pile. The player with the highest victory point total wins. In case of a tie, the tied player who has the most Stake cards wins the game. If there is still a tie, the game ends in a draw. The winning guild is now master of Cadwallon!

### Game Round Summary

#### Beginning of the Round

- Before the round begins, each player draws four cards to form his hand, which may require him to reshuffle his Discard Pile and make a new Deck.

#### Intrigue Phase

- Starting with the First Player and continuing clockwise, each player places or discards one Agent, Location, or Relic.
- Play continues until all players have no cards in hand.

#### Resolution Phase

- Resolve each District one after the other.
- Place each Stake on the Discard Pile of the player who won it.
- Place all cards assigned to that District in their owner's Discard Pile.
- Any Stake that is not won remains on the table along with any cards that are assigned to that District.

#### End of the Round

- Flip one new Stake card at each empty District.
- The “First Player” card shifts one player to the left.

## OPTIONAL RULES

After playing a couple of games, the following rules can be added to create new challenges. Players can use any number or combination of these optional rules as long as all players agree on them before the game begins. We recommend that you add the optional rules one at a time in the order listed.

### Customizing Your Guild

(Cards with the letter “B” in the lower-left corner.)

After players are familiar with their guilds, they may wish to customize them.

Before the game begins, take all 20 cards that belong to a guild and choose 11 to create a Deck. This gives the player a chance to concentrate on one Arcanum, bribe personalities more effectively, or take better advantage of the abilities on Location cards. Place the rest of the Guild cards back in the box.



### Objectives

(Cards with the letter “C” in the lower-left corner.)

Before the game begins, deal four Objective cards facedown to each player. Players only look at their own cards. Each player discards two cards without showing them to the other players and keeps the two remaining cards facedown in front of him.

Objective cards require a player to collect a number of Stake cards from a specific fiefdom. The fiefdom of a Stake card is listed beneath the card title.

**Example:** To study the exotic blood gardens, a player must collect at least three Stake cards from the Ogrokh fiefdom before the end of the game. Any Stake cards displaying “Ogrokh” beneath the card title can be used to fulfill this Objective.

### SPECIAL CASES:

- Each Stake card can only be used to complete a single Objective.
- Stake cards displaying “All Fiefdoms” belong to all fiefdoms of Cadwallon and can be used to fulfill any Objective card.

At the end of the game, players reveal their Objective cards and check if they were fulfilled. If a player has completed the requirements, he adds the victory points shown on the Objective card to his final score.



## The Militia

(Cards with the letter “D” in the lower-left corner.)

Before the game begins, shuffle the six Militia cards and place them facedown in an independent pile that is in reach of all players.

During a player’s turn, he can discard a Stake card (Relic, Personality, or Location) from his hand to obtain the support of the Militia. This player then draws the top Militia card and assigns it to any District (faceup or facedown, following the same rules as Agent cards). The Militia card is treated as an Agent of that guild for the round.


At the end of the Resolution Phase, return all Militia cards to the Militia pile, and reshuffle them.

## The Guild Masters

(Cards with the letter “E” in the lower-left corner.)

Before the game begins, each player chooses one of the three available masters for his guild. The chosen Guild Master is placed below his Guild Crest card and the other two are returned to the box.

Each Guild Master has a unique ability. There are two types of Guild Master abilities:

- If the  symbol is shown, the ability can be used only once each round. After using the ability, rotate the card sideways as a reminder. These abilities become available again at the beginning of the next round. Rotate the card to its upright position at the beginning of the next round.
- If no symbol is shown beside the text, the ability can be used any number of times during a round.



## Random Events

(Cards with the letter “F” in the lower-left corner.)

Before the game begins, shuffle the 12 Event cards facedown. Instead of adding the “Ducal Jubilee” card to the Neutral District, randomly take three Event cards and mix them with the “Ducal Jubilee” card. Place these four cards at the bottom of the Event card pile. Flip over the top Event card and place it on top of the pile.

At the beginning of each round, the first player moves the top Event card to the center of the table. Its effect applies for the whole round.

He also flips over the next card and places it on top of the Event pile. The effect of this card won’t apply until the following round, but this allows the players to foresee the upcoming effect and the challenge it presents.

When the “Ducal Jubilee” card is flipped over, the players know that there is only one final round of play.



## Tactical Discards

This rule allows a player to make his deck smaller in order to optimize his strategy.

When a player wins a Stake card, he has two options:

- Add the Stake card to his Discard Pile (as usual); **or**
- Place the Stake card under his Guild Crest card. The Stake card stays there for the rest of the game.
- At the end of the game, each player adds the victory point value of all cards in his deck, in his discard pile, and under his Guild Crest card.





# Arcana

REVISED EDITION

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