Battle for Rokugan

Rulebook

The wind whipped across the banners that formed a row of color stretching the length of the field. The line represented the full measure of her province's strength. Would it be enough to hold the castle?

It would have to be. Her honor depended on it.

The daimyō nudged her steed and trotted up alongside the line of ashigaru peasant levies. They clutched their spears and stared straight ahead, toward what could be their doom. But if they died courageously, they would be rewarded in the next life. Perhaps they would even be reborn as samurai.

Behind them, her loyal samurai rested their hands on the hilts of their swords. The polished lacquer of their armor gleamed beneath the sun, their family crests adorning their helmets in metal wreaths. Beyond, the cavalry shifted, horses whickering to be loosed.

The creaking of a thousand branches snapped her attention across the field. Behind the enemy's own infantry line, a thousand longbows pointed upward.

"Prepare to receive fire!" she called.

Her clan's shugenja began their chant, long hair and colored sleeves fluttering in the wind like the smoke of incense drifting to the heavens with their prayers.

A thousand whistles screamed through the air, a dark swarm of death descending upon her army.

The chant crescendoed to a peak. Without warning, the wind shifted direction. The arrows buried themselves harmlessly in the dirt before her ashigaru.

A battlecry went up from the enemy line, and the wave of enemy infantry rushed forth to meet them.

She looked to her forces and shouted at the top of her lungs, her horse rearing beneath her. "Steel yourselves, soldiers! For the Emperor! For Rokugan!"

Game Overview

Battle for Rokugan puts players in the roles of daimyō of the Great Clans fighting for territory. Daimyō deploy forces to gain control of provinces, which earn them honor and spread their influence across the land. Powerful magics surge across the land, forces clash, and the fates of all clans hang in the balance!

Object of the Game

Rokugan is a land filled with spirits, beauty, and strife. In *Battle for Rokugan*, each player leads a clan by taking the role of a daimyō, who must make military decisions that anticipate their opponents' moves. Scouts and shugenja—priests and priestesses who serve the kami of the land—are sent forth to assist the daimyō by gathering information and destroying enemy forces. Such resources are limited, however, so the daimyō must call upon their services wisely.

On the battlefield, the clan's forces clash with enemy forces to control territories, as well as defend the lands their daimyō has already claimed. Each daimyō also seeks to bring honor to their clan by achieving a secret objective. And through it all, dark forces dwelling in the Shadowlands whisper of power beyond imagining...for a price.

Strength, cunning, strategy, and wisdom pave the path to success in *Battle for Rokugan*. The land is there for the taking! The most honorable daimyō will win the day.
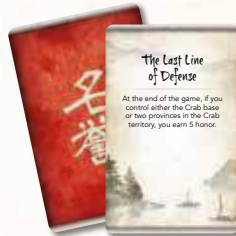
Components

1 GAME BOARD

**22 TERRITORY CARDS
(2 PER TERRITORY)**

10 INITIATIVE CARDS

7 DAIMYŌ SCREENS

12 SECRET OBJECTIVE CARDS

1 FIRST PLAYER CARD

189 COMBAT TOKENS (27 PER CLAN)

5 SHUGENJA CARDS

10 SCOUT CARDS

210 CONTROL TOKENS (30 PER CLAN)

**4 HONOR BONUS
TOKENS**

**4 DEFENSE BONUS
TOKENS**

**1 SHRINE
TOKEN**

**1 HARBOR
TOKEN**

**1 BATTLEFIELD
TOKEN**

**15 PEACE
TOKENS**

**15 SCORCHED
EARTH TOKENS**

**1 ROUND TRACK
TOKEN**

Setup

To set up a game of Battle for Rokugan, follow these steps:

1. **Place Game Board:** Place the game board in the center of the play area. Place the special tokens in a pile near the board.

2. **Randomize Territory Cards:** Place one random card from each territory facedown under the matching territory space along the edge of the game board. All territory cards not placed under the game board are returned to the game box.

Territory Cards

3. **Choose Clans:** Each player chooses a clan, takes their clan's corresponding daimyō screen and tokens, and then reads their clan ability aloud to the other players. Then, each player takes their bluff token and places it behind their daimyō screen. Finally, players flip their remaining combat tokens facedown and mix them to create a randomized COMBAT TOKEN POOL.

Control Tokens *Daimyō Screen with Bluff Token* *Combat Token Pool*

4. **Distribute Scout and Shugenja Cards:** Deal two scout cards and one shugenja card to each player.

5. **Distribute Secret Objectives:** Shuffle the secret objective cards and deal two to each player. Each player chooses one of the two cards they receive; that card is that player's SECRET OBJECTIVE. Return the remaining secret objective cards to the game box. A player's secret objective card must remain hidden from other players.

Scout and Shugenja Cards *Secret Objective Card*

6. **Populate Capitals:** Each player locates their clan's capital (the province on the board with the clan's symbol) and places one of their control tokens facedown in that capital's province.

Scorpion and Crane place control tokens in the provinces containing their respective clan capitals.

7. **Set Aside Control Tokens:** Each player sets aside the number of control tokens indicated by the "Control Token Setup" table to the right. These set-aside tokens will be placed during step 10.

Control Token Setup	
Number of Players	Number of Tokens Each
2	11
3	7
4	5
5	4

8. **Determine First Player:** Shuffle the initiative card of each clan chosen for this game to create the INITIATIVE DECK. Then, reveal the top card from the deck; the clan that corresponds to the revealed card is the FIRST PLAYER. That player takes the first player card and places it near their daimyō screen. Return the revealed initiative card to the game box.

Initiative Cards

Unicorn is the first player for round one.

9. **Complete Initiative Deck:** Shuffle the neutral initiative cards (the ones that do not have a clan icon). Add these cards to the remaining cards in the initiative deck, one at a time, until the initiative deck has a total of four cards. (For a five-player game, no neutral initiative cards are used.) Return the remaining neutral initiative cards to the game box without looking at them. Shuffle the initiative deck and place it near the game board.

Neutral Initiative Cards

Four-Card Initiative Deck

The Unicorn initiative card is returned to the game box.

10. **Place Starting Control Tokens:** Beginning with the first player and proceeding clockwise, each player places one of their set-aside control tokens **facedown** in the center of any province that does not already contain a control token. Provinces containing clan capitals (that do not already contain control tokens) and the Shadowlands provinces can be chosen at setup.

Players continue placing control tokens in this way until all of the control tokens set aside during step 7 have been placed.

11. **Place Round Track Token:** Place the round track token on space "1" of the round track, which is located at the bottom of the game board.

Round Track Token

A four-player game between Crab, Phoenix, Scorpion, and Unicorn after setup.

Key Concepts

This section contains many of the key concepts that players will need to understand to play the game.

The Map

The game board features a map of Rokugan. The map contains two landmasses and a sea. The landmasses are divided into PROVINCES, which are grouped into TERRITORIES.

Provinces

A province is an area of the map surrounded by a yellow PERIMETER. A province that is completely surrounded by other provinces or the map edge is a LANDLOCKED PROVINCE. A province that has a perimeter that touches the sea is a COASTAL PROVINCE.

Perimeter **Landlocked Province** **Coastal Province**
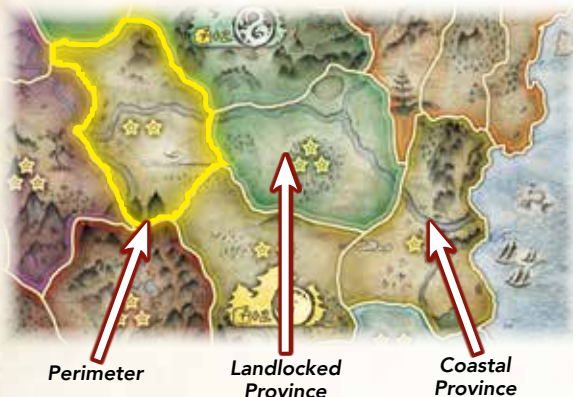
A province's perimeter comprises multiple BORDERS. The portion of a perimeter that is shared by two provinces is a LAND BORDER, and two provinces that share a land border are adjacent. The portion of a perimeter that is shared by a province and the sea is a COASTAL BORDER.

Land Border **Coastal Border** **Land Border**

Territories

A territory is a grouping of multiple provinces. All of the provinces that make up a territory are the same color.

Crane Territory

The Crane territory comprises the three indicated provinces.

Clans

Each player chooses their clan during setup. Battle for Rokugan has seven clans:

Crab *Crane* *Dragon* *Lion*

Phoenix *Scorpion* *Unicorn*

Control and Combat Tokens

Each clan has control and combat tokens that contain its clan symbol. These tokens are double-sided.

Facedown Control Token *Faceup Control Token* *Facedown Combat Token* *Faceup Combat Token*

During the game, the players will place control tokens in provinces. A player CONTROLS all provinces containing their control tokens. Controlling provinces is the primary way in which a player earns honor and wins the game, which is explained later.

If a card effect removes a control token from a province, faceup control tokens are removed before facedown control tokens.

Capitals

Each clan has a CAPITAL that is represented by a castle icon on the map. At the beginning of the game, each clan controls the province where its clan capital is located.

This province contains the Scorpion clan capital.

Playing the Game

A game of Battle for Rokugan is played over a series of five rounds. Each round consists of the following three phases that players resolve in order: the upkeep phase, the placement phase, and the resolution phase.

Upkeep Phase

During the upkeep phase, players determine a new first player, draw combat tokens, and play non-Shadowlands territory cards. To resolve the upkeep phase, players perform the following steps:

1. **Determine First Player (Ignore During First Round):** The first player reveals the top card of the initiative deck. The clan that corresponds to the revealed card is the new first player for the current game round. That player takes the FIRST PLAYER CARD; this card can be used at the start of the first player's turn during the placement phase. (Since a first player was determined during setup, players ignore this step for the first round of the game.)

   ◆ If a neutral initiative card indicates more than one player would be first player, the tied player closest to the right of the current first player is the new first player.

   ◆ During a two-player game, the first player card is not used.

Dragon is now the first player.

2. **Draw Combat Tokens:** Players place their bluff combat tokens faceup behind their screens. Then, they draw combat tokens from their combat token pools and place the tokens behind their screens until they each have a total of six tokens behind the screen. Then, players flip their drawn tokens faceup; these six faceup tokens are the player's HAND.

Example of a player's hand of combat tokens after step 2 of the upkeep phase.

3. **Play Territory Cards (Ignore During First Round):** Beginning with the first player and proceeding clockwise, each player must either play one of their territory cards or pass. If a player passes, they can still play a territory card during a later turn, unless all other players also pass. Players continue taking turns playing territory cards or passing until all players have passed consecutively. Then, the upkeep phase ends and the placement phase begins. (Players ignore this step during the first round of the game since they will not have any territory cards.)

Territory Card

Placement Phase

During the placement phase, players place their combat tokens on the map to fortify their defenses, to attack neighboring clans, or to engage in diplomacy.

Beginning with the first player and proceeding clockwise, each player places one of their combat tokens from their hand **facedown** on the map. Players continue taking turns placing combat tokens until each player has one combat token remaining behind their screen. Then, players proceed to the resolution phase.

Placing Combat Tokens

Each player has a common set of combat tokens and one clan-specific combat token. The type and number of each token is listed on each player's daimyō screen. This is open information for all players.

Each army, navy, shinobi, and blessing token has a **STRENGTH**.

Strength

Each type of combat token has its own placement rules, but in general they are placed either on borders or in the middle of a province. The different combat tokens and their rules for placement are explained later.

Only one combat token can be placed on each border. Combat tokens are always placed facedown. (The exception to both of these rules is the blessing token, which is explained later.)

There is no limit to the number of combat tokens a player can place in the middle of a province to defend it.

When placing a token on a border, the player should place the token in the center of the border, orienting the token so its arrow points toward the province they are attacking.

When placing a token in the middle of a province, the player should orient the token toward the golden flowers in that province.

A player may look at their own facedown combat tokens on the board at any time.

The Combat Tokens

This section describes the various combat tokens and their respective rules for placement in detail. Resolving combat tokens is explained later.

If a token is placed in a way that violates the rules governing its placement, it is removed during the resolution phase.

Army

Armies are the most common tokens players use to defend and attack provinces.

To attack, a player can place an army token on a land border between a province they control and an adjacent province they wish to attack. To defend, a player can place an army token in **any** province (landlocked or coastal) they control.

Scorpion attacks Unicorn by placing an army token on an adjacent land border.

Navy

Navies allow players to attack distant shores beyond the reach of armies.

To attack, a player can place a navy token on **any** coastal border. To defend, a player can place a navy token in a coastal province they control.

Shinobi

The rare and secretive shinobi can launch surprise attacks in any province—no place is safe from their silent blades. The shinobi strike over great distances, and can be called upon to either defend or attack. A player can place a shinobi token in the center of **any** province. If a player places a shinobi token in a province they control, that token is used to defend; otherwise, it is used to attack.

Blessing

Occasionally, a clan daimyō's strategic plan requires additional guidance and assistance from the kami in the form of a blessing.

A player can place a blessing token **faceup and on top of** any of their facedown army, navy, or shinobi tokens.

If a blessing is on top of a combat token, those two tokens **cannot** be targeted by card effects or clan abilities. During the resolution phase, the strength of the blessing is added to the strength of its clan's attack or defense.

Diplomacy

When peace is desired, a diplomatic approach is best. The diplomacy token bestows a permanent peace on a province. A player can place their diplomacy token in any province they control to protect it against current and future attacks.

Raid

As a last resort, a daimyō may decide to destroy a province rather than allow territory to fall into enemy hands. The raid token leaves nothing but scorched earth behind.

A player can place a raid token in a province they do not control. When revealing the raid token during the resolution phase, a player can only trigger its effect if the raid token is either in the same province as their shinobi token or in a province that is adjacent to a province they control.

Bluff

Sometimes the best strategy is deception. The bluff token allows a daimyō to feint in the hope of drawing out the enemy.

To bluff, a player can place this token as if it were any non-blessing combat token. Placing a bluff token is also how a player saves a valuable combat token for the next round since players place all but one of their combat tokens that are behind their screens. Discarded bluff tokens are always returned to their owners' hands.

Unicorn attacks Crab. Crab defends his province by placing a combat token in its center.

Resolution Phase

During the resolution phase, players perform the following steps to resolve the combat tokens they placed on the map. After a token is resolved, it is discarded to a faceup pile near the player who placed it. This is the player's DISCARD PILE.

1. **Reveal Combat Tokens:** Players flip all combat tokens on the map faceup.

2. **Discard Bluff and Illegally Placed Tokens:** Players discard any bluff tokens or illegally placed combat tokens from the map. Players' bluff tokens are returned to them and are placed behind their respective screens.

3. **Resolve Raid Tokens:** Players resolve each raid token. To resolve a raid token, players discard all combat tokens that share a province or border with that raid token; they also remove all control tokens from the province. Then, the raid token is replaced with a scorched earth token.

4. **Resolve Diplomacy Tokens:** Players resolve each diplomacy token. To resolve a diplomacy token, the players discard all combat tokens that share a province or border with that diplomacy token. Then, the diplomacy token is replaced with a peace token.

5. **Resolve Battles:** Players resolve all BATTLES one at a time. Since all battles occur simultaneously, the order in which battles are resolved does not matter.

6. **Claim Territories:** Each player claims the territory cards for the territories they control. A player controls a territory if they control each province in that territory.

7. **Advance Round Track:** Advance the round track token one space.

Resolving Battles

A battle occurs when a clan's combat token is in a province or on the border of a province that the clan does not control. During a battle, any clans that do not control the province are ATTACKERS; there can be multiple attackers attempting to take control of a single province. If a clan controls the province being attacked, that clan is the DEFENDER.

To resolve a battle, the players determine their total strength. Each attacker's total is the sum of the strengths of their tokens that are attacking the province. The defender's total is the sum of the strengths of their tokens they placed to defend the province, plus any additional defense bonuses (defense bonuses are explained later).

The player with the highest total wins the battle. If there is a tie for the highest total, the defender wins the battle.

If an empty province is attacked, there is no defender; the attacker compares their total strength against any defense bonuses present in the province. When an empty province is attacked, if the attacker does not win the battle, nothing happens.

After a battle, all of the combat tokens involved in the battle are discarded.

If an attacker wins the battle, they remove all of the defender's control tokens from the province. Then, they place one of their own control tokens facedown in the province.

If the defender wins the battle, their control tokens remain in the province. Then, they place another one of their control tokens in the province faceup, which provides a defense bonus during their future battles in that province. See "Successful Defense" on page 10 for more details.

Battle Example

Phoenix has attacked Dragon from two of his provinces using two army tokens with strengths of 1. Scorpion has attacked Dragon using an army token with a strength of 3. Dragon has defended her province using an army token with a strength of 1.

Each clan calculates and compares its total strength. Dragon's strength is 1, Phoenix's strength is 2, and Scorpion's strength is 3.

Scorpion has the highest total strength, so she takes control of the province.

She removes the combat and control tokens from the province and its borders. Then, she places one of her control tokens facedown in the province.

End of the Game

The game ends after five rounds. Each player reveals their secret objective card and determines their total **HONOR**.

Each player earns honor as follows:

◆ A number of honor equal to the total number of flowers in the provinces they control. Some flowers are printed on the map, and some flowers are on tokens.

Three Honor

◆ One honor for each of their **faceup** control tokens on the map; no honor is awarded for faceup control tokens in the Shadowlands provinces.

◆ A number of honor provided by their secret objective.

Faceup Control Token

◆ Five honor for each territory they control; no honor is awarded for controlling the Shadowlands provinces.

Additional Rules

This section contains additional rules that players need to know to play the game.

Successful Defense

Each time a province is successfully defended, the defender places one of their **faceup** control tokens in that province, which provides that province with a defense bonus during their future battles.

If an attack against a province fails for any reason, that province is also treated as being successfully defended. Finally, if a player places an army, navy, or shinobi token to defend a province and that province is not attacked, the province is treated as being successfully defended.

Defense Bonuses

There are a variety of defense bonuses that a defender can use to increase their strength during a battle, as follows:

◆ Some provinces, such as provinces with a clan capital, have an inherent defense bonus. These bonuses are represented on the map by an icon and strength. (A province containing a clan capital has a defense bonus even if that clan is not represented by a player in the game.)

Defense Bonus Printed on Province

◆ Each faceup control token in a province provides the defender with a defense strength of 1. Each time a player successfully defends a province, they place a faceup control token in the province they defended.

◆ There is no limit to the number of control tokens a player can have in a province if they continually defend that province successfully.

◆ Some special tokens added to the board by territory cards provide defense bonuses. Players place these tokens on the board by playing territory cards.

Special Tokens

Special tokens remain on the board for the duration of the game. These include scorched earth tokens, peace tokens, and a variety of tokens that are placed by territory card effects. A province can only contain one special token at any time.

Peace and scorched earth tokens cannot be replaced by other special tokens, but other special tokens can be replaced by peace and scorched earth tokens.

Example: Dragon controls a province that contains the harbor token. During the placement phase, Dragon places her diplomacy token in that province. During the resolution phase, the diplomacy token causes a peace token to be placed in the province, which replaces the harbor token.

Scorched Earth

If a province contains a scorched earth token, that province cannot be controlled or attacked for the remainder of the game. Players cannot place combat tokens in a province that contains a scorched earth token or on a border of that province.

A player can still control a territory if one or more provinces in that territory contain a scorched earth token. To control the territory, the player only needs to control the provinces without scorched earth tokens.

Peace

If a province contains a peace token, that province cannot be attacked and the player who controls it cannot attack adjacent provinces from the peaceful province. Players cannot place combat tokens in a province or on a border of a province that contains a peace token.

Shrine

If a province contains a shrine token, that province cannot be attacked; however, the player who controls it **can** attack provinces that are adjacent to it. Players who do not control the province containing a shrine token cannot place combat tokens in it or on its borders.

Battlefield

The battlefield token ensures that honorable battle will always occur in its province. If a province contains a battlefield token, players cannot place diplomacy tokens or raid tokens in that province.

Harbor

The harbor token must be placed in a landlocked province. While a province contains a harbor token, it is a coastal province. The player who controls that province can defend it with navy tokens, and other players can attack it by placing navy tokens on its borders, even without controlling adjacent provinces.

Honor Bonus and Defense Bonus

Honor and defense bonus tokens are added to the board by territory cards. Honor bonus tokens provide additional honor as indicated by the token. Defense bonus tokens provide additional defense strength as indicated by the token. Each defense bonus token also provides one additional honor.

Playing Territory Cards

Each territory has a space on the game board for a territory card. At the end of each resolution phase, each player determines if they control any territories. If a player controls all of the provinces in one territory, they take the card from that territory's space.

At the end of the resolution phase, if a player loses control of a territory and they have not played its territory card, the card is returned to its matching space on the board.

Territory cards provide players with single-use abilities. Players can play territory cards during the upkeep phase. The two Shadowlands territory cards are the exception to this rule; see "The Shadowlands" below.

To play a territory card, a player reads and resolves the text on the card. Then, they return it to the game box; that card cannot be played again during the game. After a territory's card is played, it is not replaced. Any players who gain control of that territory later in the game do not gain a card for doing so.

Removing Tokens

When a combat token is removed, it is discarded and placed in its owner's discard pile.

When a control token is removed, it is returned to its owner's pool of control tokens. If a card effect instructs a player to remove one of their control tokens, they choose the province from which they remove the token. If the chosen province contains more than one control token, faceup control tokens are removed before facedown control tokens.

When a special token is removed, it is returned to the pile.

The Shadowlands

The southwest provinces of the map are the Shadowlands. Each of these two provinces is a single-province territory with a defense bonus.

There are two territory cards for the Shadowlands, one for the north province and one for the south province. (North and south are indicated by the arrows next to the Shadowlands icon.)

If a player controls a province in the Shadowlands, they take the appropriate territory card as normal. Shadowlands territory cards are not played during the upkeep phase; they are played at the start of a player's turn during the placement phase. These cards grant dark, powerful abilities to the daimyō who use them, but they require sacrifice.

The Shadowlands do not provide players with honor at the end of the game. A player does **not** gain honor for controlling Shadowlands territories or for having faceup control tokens in either Shadowlands province.

The Shadowlands contains two single-province territories, both highlighted here in blue.

The Shadowlands

To the south of Rokugan lie the blighted Shadowlands, a dark realm under the sway of Fu Leng and the corrupted armies from the realm of Jigoku. The only safeguard between the Shadowlands and Rokugan is the mighty Kaiu Wall and its builders and defenders, the Crab Clan. Should the Wall ever fall, a combined force of goblins, ogres, undead, and legendary demons known as oni would spill forth from the Shadowlands with the sole intention of destroying civilization.

Scout and Shugenja Cards

Scout cards are single-use cards that allow daimyō to send their scouts into the battle to gather information about the opposing forces. During the placement phase, a player can play one or both of their scout cards at the start of their turn, before placing a combat token. Then, they return the card to the game box; that card cannot be played again during the game.

Shugenja cards are single-use cards that allow daimyō to harness their shugenjas' magic to eliminate the opposing forces. During the placement phase, a player can play their shugenja card at the start of their turn, before placing a combat token. Then, they return the card to the game box; that card cannot be played again during the game.

Ronin

If a player has no control tokens on the board at the start of the upkeep phase, they become **RONIN**. During that round's placement phase, the ronin player can place army tokens on any land border, and they cannot place raid or diplomacy tokens. If a ronin player cannot place any tokens during their turn, that turn is skipped and the ronin player cannot take any more turns during that placement phase.

At the start of the next upkeep phase, if the ronin player has at least one control token on the board, they are no longer ronin and all normal rules apply to them.

Unicorn is ronin. During this placement phase, Unicorn can place his tokens ignoring adjacency rules.

Quick Reference

Upkeep Phase Order
1. Determine First Player
2. Draw Combat Tokens
3. Play Territory Cards

Placement Phase
- ❖ Players take turns placing combat tokens on the board to attack or defend
- ❖ Only one combat token can be placed on a border (blessings are the exception)
- ❖ Combat tokens are always placed facedown (blessings are the exception)
- ❖ No limit to the number of combat tokens a player can place to defend

Resolution Phase Order
1. Reveal Combat Tokens
2. Discard Bluff and Illegally Placed Tokens
3. Resolve Raid Tokens
4. Resolve Diplomacy Tokens
5. Resolve Battles
6. Claim Territories
7. Advance Round Track

End of Game Honor
- ❖ Honor equal to the total number of flowers in the provinces a player controls
  - ➤ No honor for any faceup control tokens in the Shadowlands
- ❖ Honor provided by a player's secret objective
- ❖ Five honor for each territory a player controls
  - ➤ No honor for the Shadowlands territories

Crab   **Crane**

Dragon   **Lion**   **Phoenix**

Scorpion   **Unicorn**

Credits

FANTASY FLIGHT SUPPLY
2
PROTECTIVE CARD SLEEVES