Warring Kingdom

By Harry Gao

v. 1.0

King Thorne of Eastmore is dead. He left no heirs to inherit his crown. His throne sits empty. The land lies in turmoil as fear and uncertainty grip the people. While the country falls into chaos, petty lordlings and would-be-kings plot how best to claim the vacant throne.

You are one such lord. But are you destined for greatness or obscurity? You rule over a destitute land, home to naught but vagrants and militia. Your treasury holds little more than cheap coins. But from such humble beginnings legends are made.

The enemy is at your doorstep. Your neighboring lords gaze longingly at your land. Will you surrender it to them? Or will you marshal your troops, galvanize your economy, and attack the strongholds of your rivals? Do you have what it takes to bring their castle walls crashing down around them? Do you have it in you to be King? Prove yourself, in the Warring Kingdom.

Overview

Warring Kingdom pits 2-4 players against each other in a war for the throne. It uses a deck building mechanic and focuses on player interaction. Every player needs to balance economic and military advancement to seek the winning edge. Players control and supply their armies from their castles, where they rule as lords and deploy their armies with one goal in mind: becoming king. The first player to destroy another lord's castle wins.

Box Contents

A complete game includes 220 cards, 12 six-sided dice, 4 supply identifiers, and this rulebook. The cards consist of:

- 4 castle cards
- 4 reference cards
- 44 income cards (16 copper, 12 silver and 12 gold)
- 44 base supply cards (16 beggars, 16 town guards and 12 warriors)
- 128 Merchant supply cards (4 copies each of 32 different cards)

For New Players

Welcome to the Warring Kingdom! If this is your first time playing this game, here are a few hints to help you level the playing field.

- Use the glossary in the appendix to understand key terminology. Words like **Return, Discard, Draw**, and **Strike** all have very specific meanings.

- Limit your military buildup and err on the side of strong economy.

- Pay attention to the details of combat rules and carefully follow the combat examples.

- Use the Reference card to guide you through each turn.
- If everyone at the table is a new player, use the blitz rule variant.

The Castle and Victory

The *Castle* represents a player's reign. The first player to successfully destroy another opponent's *Castle* wins the game. For faster gameplay, use the "Aged Castle" side (see variants at the end of the rulebook).

How to Read a Card

If a particular attribute is not applicable, the space where that attribute would normally be is left blank.

Upkeep Cost

Offensive Attack Strength

Defensive Attack Strength

Hit Point

Class

Name

Cost

Subclass

Special Ability *actions start with the word "Action".*

Name: The name of the card.

Upkeep: The cost paid to keep a card on the board turn to turn.

Offensive Attack Strength: The amount of damage per strike the card does when you are besieging an opponent's castle.

Defensive Attack Strength: The amount of damage per strike the card does when you are defending your own castle from an opponent's attack.

Hit Point: The amount of damage a card can withstand before it becomes wounded.

Cost: The one-time cost of buying the card from the Supply.

Class / Subclass: The type of card and to which Supply deck the card belongs.

Special Abilities: These are specific to the card and come in play during specific phases. The *Action* keyword indicates a special ability that can be taken during the action phase of the turn. Non-Action abilities generally take effect

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in other specific situations; for example, *Combat* effects will alter combat rules, while *Strike* abilities takes effect when a unit is about to Strike.

The Types of Cards

There are many different types of cards that may become available to a player throughout the game.

Income

Income cards provide coins for buying cards and paying upkeep. *Copper*, *Silver*, and *Gold* provide 1, 2, and 3 coins respectively.

Base Supply Units

Beggars, *Town Guards*, and *Warriors* are base supply Civilian and Soldier units available to all players.

Civilians

Skilled Civilians provide the support to boost your economy as well as give you certain advantages in combat.

Soldiers

Skilled soldiers are the power hitters you'll want in your army.

Weapons

Weapons are a special type of equipment, designed to make your army much more deadly.

Other Equipment

Non-weapon equipment, such as Armor, Potion and Book, will give you the extra edge in any number of situations.

Setup

First, separate all the cards by their card types: Castle, Reference, Copper, Silver, Gold, Beggar, Town Guard, and Warrior, into separate stacks, then sort the remaining cards into four decks. Put all Civilians in one deck, all Soldiers in a second deck, all Weapons in a third deck, and all other items in a fourth deck. Note that the four different decks have their own unique watermarks for easy sorting, setup and cleanup.

Starting Deck

At the start of the game, each player receives 1 Castle, 1 Reference Card, 4 Coppers, 3 Town Guards, and 3 Beggars. Place your Castle (with 23 HP side up) directly in front of you. Keep your reference card as a guide.

Shuffle the Town Guards, Coppers, and Beggars together and set them down by your Castle as your starting deck you will draw from. Keep it facedown at all times. Keep a face-up discard pile beside it. When you need to draw from an empty deck, shuffle your discard pile to create your new deck.

Supply Area

All other cards go to the Supply Area. See the diagram below for a suggested layout. Place each unique income card (Copper, Silver, and Gold) and Base Unit (Beggar, Town Guard, and Warrior) face-up in its own pile. There are four Supply decks (Civilians, Soldiers, Weapons, Equipment). Shuffle each one separately and place it facedown. Place the supply identifiers next to the respective decks.

Supply Area Suggested Layout

Player's Board Area

Each player has his or her own playing area. The main section of a player's area is made up of 5 columns, or "fronts," and 2 rows, giving you 10 slots on which to deploy units. Units deployed in this area engage in combat.

Each slot can contain one unit you deploy there. Weapons and equipment must be attached to an already deployed unit. Deployed units may be discarded to free up slots and to reduce upkeep at any time during your turn.

Place your *Castle* in its own 3rd row in Column 3 behind units deployed in the same Column.

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5

Row 1

Row 2

Castle Row — *Player Deck* — *Discard Pile*

10 Available slots for deploying your units

Starting the Game

Everyone simultaneously draws five cards from their player deck to their hand.

The youngest player goes first. Turn order continues clockwise.

Turn Overview

There are six possible phases each turn:

1. Act
2. Deploy
3. Attack (You cannot Buy if you Attack)
4. Pay
5. Buy (skip Buy if you attacked)
6. Discard and Draw

Act:

You may perform **one** action each turn. Card abilities that start with "*Action*" are actions you may choose to take. If a card has multiple actions, choose only one. You can play an action card from your hand or board. If you use an Action card from your hand, that card cannot be deployed and is discarded at the end of your turn. If you use the "*action*" ability from a card deployed on your board, that card remains on the board.

Don't attack too early!
The attacker has
several disadvantages:

- Early cards have
  higher defensive
  strength than offensive
  strength, so the same
  unit would do more
  damage on the
  defending player's side
  than on the attacker's.

- You have to skip the
  Buy phase when you
  attack, so you can't
  build your deck.

Civilian cards tend to
be cheap, while
soldiers are expensive.
As a result, for the first
few turns when you
need to build a
stronger economy, the
Civilian Merchant can
be a great choice.

The most expensive
cards, *Catapult*
(weapon) and *Gladiator*
(soldier), cost 11 coins
each. Look for these
when you can afford
them.

Don't forget to **draw
your new hand** at the
end of your turn.
Contemplate your next
turn as your
opponents carry out

Deploy:

You may deploy **one** unit from your hand onto an empty slot on your board. You
may also deploy **any** number of Weapon or Equipment cards onto eligible units.
Units can only have one equipment of the same subclass (e.g., one melee weapon,
one body armor, and one headgear).

Attack (Must skip Buy phase):

You may attack a neighboring player (the player to your immediate left or right) with
an army that consists **of at least one soldier**. See the "Combat" section for details. If
you choose to attack you must skip your Buy phase.

Pay:

You must pay an upkeep cost for deployed cards. Most cards require an upkeep
(amount listed on the coin icon located on the upper-left side of the card). You must
pay that many coins each turn to keep that card on the board.

Determine how many coins you have available to you this turn by counting the total
value of all income cards from your hand, plus any coins you may have from actions
and your *Castle*, which provides a baseline of +3 coins each turn. Subtract the upkeep
cost of any card you wish to keep in play from your total coins.
Discard any cards you no longer wish to afford.

Buy (Skip if you attacked this turn):

You may buy **one** card if you did not attack this turn. You can
use any coins you have remaining after paying for upkeep. You
can visit **one** of the supply decks (Civilians, Soldiers, Weapons, or
Equipment) by flipping over the top three cards of that pile. All Base Units
(Beggar, Town Guard, and Warrior), Income cards, as well as the three cards just
flipped over, are available for purchase this turn.

Cards bought are placed in your discard pile. You may not deploy or use this card
during your current turn. Unbought goods from the Supply piles are discarded into
their respective discard piles.

Discard and Draw:

Discard your remaining hand. Draw five new cards. If the deck is empty, shuffle your
discard pile to form your new deck.
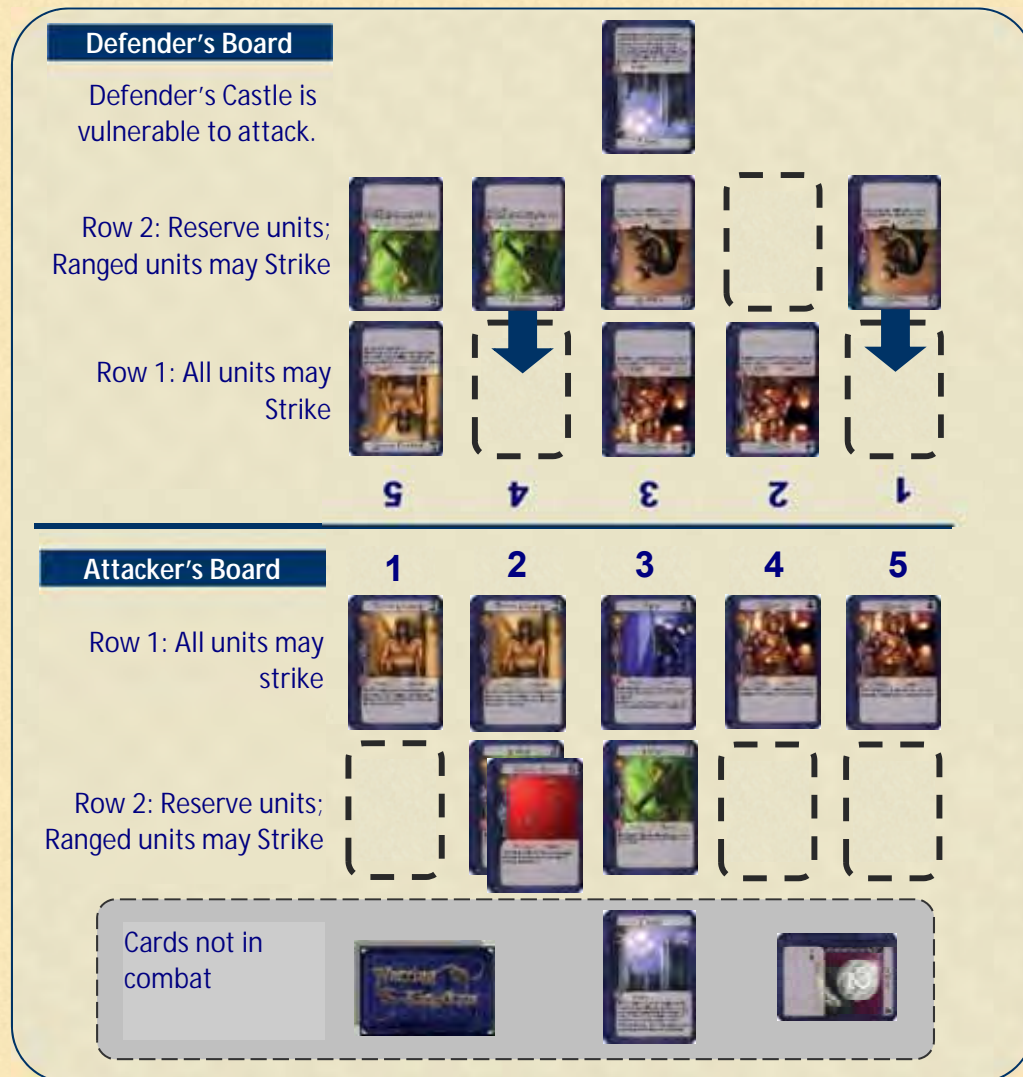
Discarding Deployed Cards

You may discard any deployed cards at any point on your turn except during Combat.

Combat Overview

Combat brings two players into direct confrontation. It may be initiated in order to weaken defenses, kill specific units, or even to capture the castle and win the game.

Combat starts with the **planning phase**, followed by several **rounds**.

In the **planning phase**, both the attacker and defender line up their boards opposite each other so the Attacker's Front 1 corresponds to the Defender's Front 5.

Term: Strike Vs. Attack

Attack is the name of the phase, during which a player can initiate combat. The player is referred to as the Attacker.

Strike is the result of die roll, where units deal damage or otherwise harm your opponent's units.

Reminder

Since the Attacker's *Castle* is not in combat, he cannot lose the game no matter what happens in the battle.

Each **round**, both players roll to determine which units strike and apply damage. Only the Defender's *Castle* is vulnerable in combat. Then, both sides discard wounded units to their respective discard pile and return killed units to the supply.

Whenever a slot in Row 1 is empty, cards on Row 2 of that same Column must move up to Row 1. **This movement is automatic and mandatory.** To help determine strikes during Combat Resolution, the Defender's *Castle* "moves" up to any empty slots in Front 3 during combat like any other card. After the end of combat it is returned to its normal location.

At the conclusion of a **round** of combat, the attacker has the option to *Continue the Siege* by discarding two income cards from his hand to initiate a new round of combat; damage does not persist between rounds.

Detailed Combat Description

Attack Requirements:

- You can only attack players to your immediate left or right.

- You must have at least one Soldier in your army in order to attack.

Step 1: Plan

The planning phase gives both the attacker and defender a chance to rally their troops. Specifically, planning occurs in the following order:
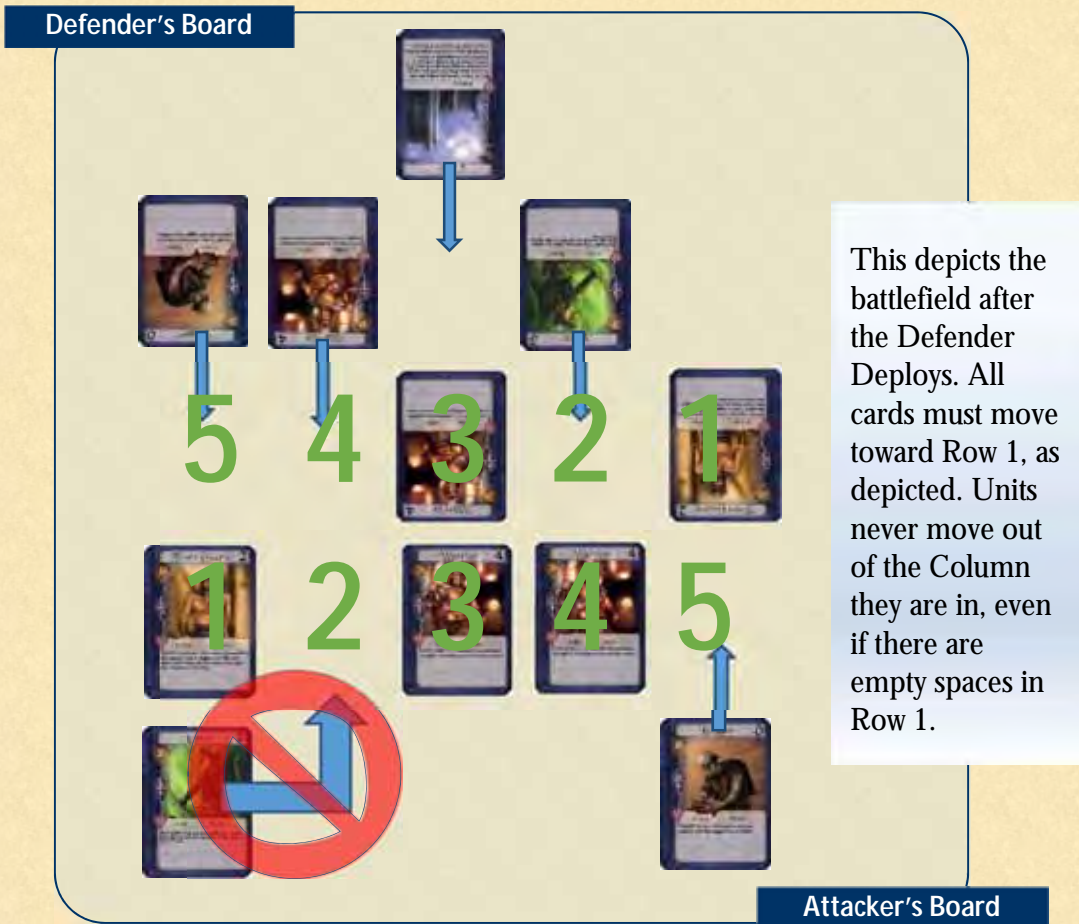
1. Declare Attack (Attacker)
   The attacker announces the attack and the target. Be sure to check that the attacker has met the **Attack Requirements** listed above.

2. Rearrangement (Defender)
   The defender rearranges the cards already on his board.

3. Deployment & Rearrangement (Attacker)
   The attacker may deploy any number of cards from his hand while rearranging the units on his board. The attacker's *Castle* **is not** part of the army nor engaged in combat so it cannot be struck.

4. Deployment (Defender)
   The defender may deploy any number of cards from his hand to reinforce his defensive line. He may only add cards to his board, not move what is already deployed.

5. Unit Advancement
   Advance Row 2 units to Row 1 following the movement rule explained in combat overview, if applicable.

Step 2: Execution

1. Roll

   Both players simultaneously roll 5 dice each to determine which units strike. A roll of 1-5 means the unit on your board in the corresponding front would strike. For instance, if you roll 1,1,5,5,5, then your leftmost unit would strike twice, rightmost unit three times, and three center units do not strike this round.

   Put all the 1s rolled on Front 1 (leftmost column), all the 2s rolled on Front 2 and so forth. Put any 6s onto the castle. If a die results in a strike from a Front that is completely vacant, put the die aside.

Defender's Board

This depicts the battlefield after the Defender Deploys. All cards must move toward Row 1, as depicted. Units never move out of the Column they are in, even if there are empty spaces in Row 1.

Attacker's Board

2. Resolve

   Resolve the strikes in ascending order. Both sides resolve all the 1s simultaneously, then resolve all the 2s, and so on.

   Unless otherwise specified by a card, only units on Row 1 are engaged in active combat. Only these units can strike, or be struck. Strikes damage opponent's units directly across from the striker, so attacker's Front 1 would strike defender's Front 5 and vice versa. If the target column is vacant, the striker chooses an enemy on the nearest nonempty Front to strike.

   Each strike deals damage equal to the striking unit's strength plus any modifiers from abilities and equipment. The attacking player uses the offensive attack strength (top number) while the defender uses the defensive attack strength (bottom number). Units become **wounded** if they take damage equal to or greater than their HP. Immediately turn wounded units (and their equipment) sideways after a strike and is considered to be out of the game. Move the card behind it (if any) up to Row 1.

   A unit striking multiple times might be able to wound multiple units. See combat example 2.

   Note that the Defender's Front 3 can never be vacant since that's where the *Castle* is located.

- If total damage is less than a unit's total HP, that unit is "**damaged**" but survives and recovers with all damage removed at the end of the round.

- If total damage is greater than or equal to a unit's total HP, defending unit is "**wounded**" and is turned sides and discarded during cleanup.

- If a dice roll "**6**" Critical Hit is applied to a wounded unit, then the unit is "**killed**" and returned to the Supply instead.

When resolving dice rolls, be sure to look at cards' special abilities in addition to offensive/defensive strength. Some cards can reduce damage received, while others can deal additional damage under specific circumstances. Remember "defensive strength" means how much damage your units inflict to enemy units when your castle is under siege, not something that reduces damage from an opponent's strike.

Step 3: Cleanup

If the defender's castle receives damage equal to or greater than its HP, it is destroyed and the attacker wins the game.

Otherwise, for each roll of "6," the player gets one "critical hit." A critical hit is applied to an opponent's wounded (not just damaged) unit to kill that unit. Critical hits must be used if possible.

Discard wounded units and their equipment to the respective player's discard pile. Return killed units and their equipment back to the respective supply discard piles. All remaining cards (including the castle) regain their full health; that is, damage

Step 4: Continuing the Siege

After the cleanup phase, the attacker may choose to end the attack and proceed to his Pay phase. Alternatively, he may continue the attack by discarding two income cards (not two coins) from his hand. This begins a new round of combat starting from execution phase. The Attacker may choose to *Continue the Siege* as many times as he wishes as long as he has enough income cards to sustain his operations.

There is no planning phase for these additional rounds, so neither player may rearrange or deploy units.

Sample Combat

Example 1

Jessie attacks Harry. Jessie has a Warrior on Front 3, and Harry has a Town Guard in Row 1 of the same Front, and a Beggar in Row 2. As the Defender, Harry also has his Castle in Front 3, Row 3. See illustration to the side.

Jessie rolls three 3s and two 6s. She would strike three times with the center Warrior. The first strike hits the Town Guard. The Warrior (offensive strength 4) delivers 4 damage, not enough to wound the Town Guard, who has 5 HP. The second strike also hits the Town Guard, who is now wounded. The extra 3 damage the strike deals is wasted (it does not spill over to another unit). Harry moves everything in the center Front up after the Town Guard falls, so the Beggar is now in the Row 1, and the Castle is in Row 2. The Warrior's third strike hits the Beggar (3 hit points), dealing enough damage to wound him. Finally, Jessie applies the two critical hits she rolled, killing both the Beggar and the Town Guard. After the end of combat, Harry must return these units to the Supply.

Simultaneously, Harry rolls a pair of 3s and three 6s. The town guard would strike the Warrior (HP 6) twice, dealing 3 damages with each blow. The

Town Guard would deal a total of 6 damages. The Warrior is wounded. Harry must use one of the three critical hits to kill the Warrior, and cannot use the other two critical hits. After the combat ends, Harry moves his Castle back to Row 3.

Example 2

Jessie announces her attack on Harry. Both sides setup their armies as described in planning phase. Jessie has three Warriors, one of which has an Axe. Harry has two Veterans, a Beggar and an Archer. Jessie rolls 1, 2, 3, 4, 4, while Harry rolls 1, 1, 2, 3, 5. See illustration.

Combat Example 2

The table below explains how these dice rolls are resolved.

At the end of the combat, Jessie Wounds Harry's Beggar and a Veteran in Front 3. Because the Veteran is wounded with an Axe, which has the special ability of automatically killing any unit it wounds, the Veteran is killed. Harry wounds Jessie's Warrior in Front 1, but fails to kill him as he did not have any Critical Hits.

In cleanup phase, Harry's Veteran is returned to the Supply, while his Beggar is discarded to his discard pile. Jessie discards her Warrior. The rest of the units/equipment remain in their respective slots as combat concludes.

In this example, the attacker's Front 4 Warrior deals 7 damages per strike. The Warrior's raw offensive strength is 4, but he also gets +2 from his ability "Join Force", which gives it +2 strength when he stands next to another Warrior. Further, the Axe provides +1 offensive strength.

Rolls	Attacker Result	Defender Result
1	Warrior strikes Archer; 4 damage, no wound	Two strikes from Front 1, but Front 1 is vacant; nothing happens.
2	One strike from Front 2, but Front 2 is vacant; nothing happens.	One strike, but Front 2 is vacant; nothing happens
3	Warrior wounds Beggar, defender's veteran and castle move up to 1st and 2nd row respectively	Beggar strikes Warrior, dealing no damage
4	Warrior deals 7 damage to nearest unit, which is Veteran (10 hit points) in Front 3, not enough to wound; Warrior then deals a second strike of 7 damage, Wounding Veteran this time with an axe.	No 4s.
5	No 5s.	Archer strikes, dealing 7 damage to the Warrior in Front 1, wounding him.
6	No 6s.	No 6s.

Game Speeds and Variations

There are three official variants to the setup rules for different game lengths and player experience.

Blitz (Shorter length, beginner friendly)

Start the game with the "Aged Castle" side up. The Castle starts with only 11 HP, but provide 1 extra coin each turn. The game is easier to play and encourages earlier, smaller battles.

Limited War (Average length, tournament friendly)

Start the game normally as described in the rules. However, once any one supply deck runs out and needs to be reshuffled, every player flips their castle card so that the "Aged Castle" side is up. The game enters sudden death after a supply deck runs out, and tends to conclude quickly thereafter.

Epic War (Longer length, 2-3 players only)

The starting deck for each player is changed to 5 Copper, 5 Town Guard, and 5 Beggar. The game lends itself to more build up and epic combats, and requires more careful management of players' decks.

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Warring
Kingdom

Appendix: Clarifications and Terminologies

General Clarifications

- If the text on a card specifically contradicts a general rule listed in the rule book, go with the card. For example, normally, units damaged but not wounded will be good as new after each round of combat, but the *Poison* card specifically states "kill all damaged units." Therefore, units damaged by *Poison* would be killed.
- Damage dealt can never be less than 0; treat all negative damage as no damage.
- Each card can only be used once during an Act phase. (e.g., a *Servant* cannot both **Search** and **Shop** in the same turn).
- The player draws 5 cards at the end of his turn; if for any reason (defensive combat, opponent uses the "sabotage" action etc.) a player has less than 5 cards at the beginning of his turn, **do not** draw to make up for the difference.
- Cards cannot be activated if its effects cannot be fully executed. (e.g., if there are no more *Warriors* remaining in the Supply, you cannot **Enlist** a *Beggar*).

Special Ability Clarifications

- **Regroup**: The **Regroup** ability is cumulative: Each **Regroup** allows for one reroll per combat (not round of attack). **Regroup** takes place immediately before *combat resolution*, after other pre-combat effects such as **Distract**.
- **Brawl**: You must have two *Town Guard*s available, either on your board or in your hand, in order to execute. There must be at least one *Beggar* in the supply.
- **Convert**: A converted unit immediate goes onto the converter's board during combat, and will behave as part of the converter's deck for all purposes. In other words, a converted unit, along with any equipment it may be carrying, switches sides and fall under the converter's control.
- **Inspire**: The effect of **Inspire** is cumulative: each *Master Warrior* you control provides +3 Strength to every Operative you control.
- **Betray**: A *Traitor* is owned by the player whose deck it is placed in, not by the player who purchased it. The owner is required to pay the *Traitor's* upkeep. The owner must deploy the *Traitor* immediately upon drawing it. This does not count as his deployment for that turn.
- **Join Force**: a *Master Warrior* counts as a *Warrior* for the purpose of **Join Forces**.
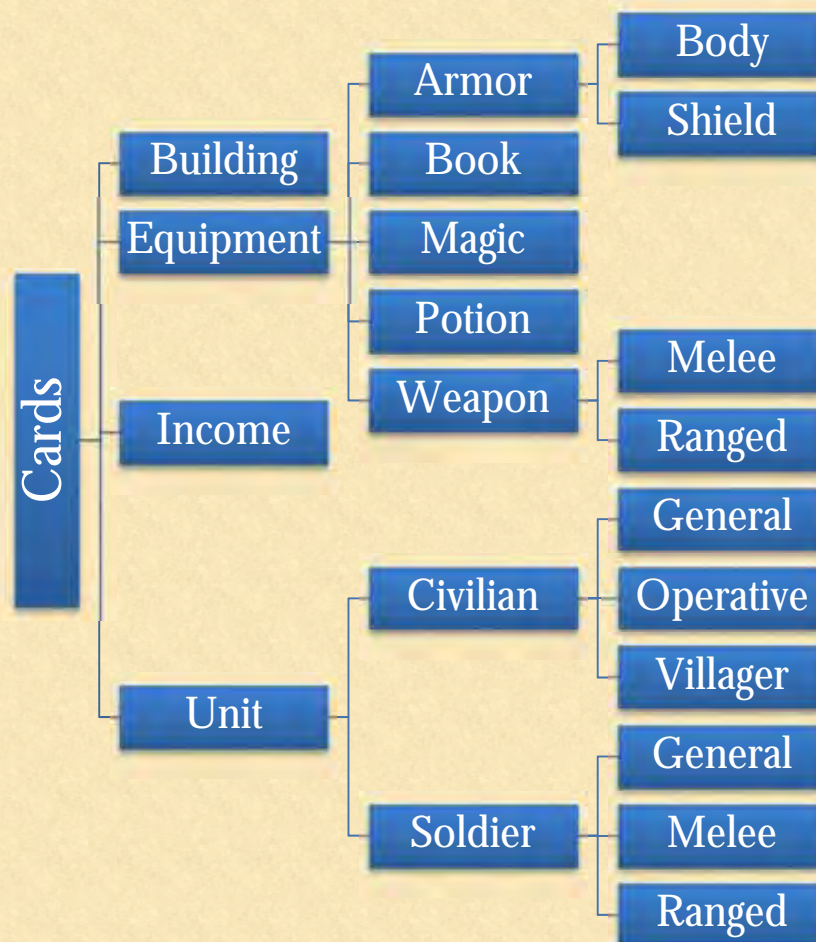
Glossary of Terms

- **Army:** The collection of units and equipment on a player's board partaking in a combat.
- **Attacker:** The player announcing the attack.
- **Buy:** To spend coins equal to a card's cost to gain the card.
- **Column (Or Front):** A Column in combat is a column in the army. There are five fronts in each battle; the leftmost one is the first Column, rightmost is the fifth. Note that your first Column corresponds with your opponent's fifth and vice versa.

- **Convert**: A converted unit leaves his owner and joins the converter's side with all the equipment he has. This is similar to returning the unit (and attached equipment, armory etc.) to the supply, except it goes to the converter's board.
- **Critical hit:** A critical hit and kills a unit that would otherwise be wounded. You can earn critical hits by rolling a 6 during combat, or by card effects (e.g., *Axe's* **Critical Hit**, *Master Archer's* **Headshot**).
- **Defender:** The player being attacked.
- **Discard:** To move a card to the owner's discard pile. Ownership remains the same.
- **Draw:** add cards to hand from respective decks. Ownership remains the same.
- **Gain:** To add a card from the supply to the player's discard pile.
- **Kill:** Units that would otherwise be wounded are killed if they are also critically hit. Killed units are returned to the Supply.
- **Return:** To remove a card from its owner and put it into the appropriate supply pile
- **Strength:** The amount of damage a card deals per strike. Can be a different value depending on whether the unit is Attacking or Defending.
- **Wound:** Units receiving damage equal to or greater than their HP are wounded, meaning they are discarded to their owner's deck at the end of the round of combat.

Class Chart

Cards
- Building
  - Armor
    - Body
    - Shield
  - Book
- Equipment
  - Magic
  - Potion
  - Weapon
    - Melee
    - Ranged
- Income
- Unit
  - Civilian
    - General
    - Operative
    - Villager
  - Soldier
    - General
    - Melee
    - Ranged

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