RULEBOOK

In Echoes of Emperors, no two games are alike. This 1v1 strategy game by Volcaban Studio combines deck-building and a dynamic, shifting battlefield, letting players become medieval rulers who must build their empires while countering their opponents. Unique maps and civilization-specific abilities make each game an unpredictable clash of tactics, forcing you to adapt.

2-4   14+   45'-90'

VOLCABAN STUDIO

CONTENTS

❶ **Set of colored game pieces** for each player:
  6 pawns with bases, 8 Camp tokens, 3 Barracks tokens, 1 Capital token

❷ **1 Unit Field** for each player

❸ **Map tiles:**
  1 starting tile per player
  7 Highland tiles, 7 Constantinople tiles
  4-player game: 7 additional Highland tiles

❹ **6 Civilization Decks** (36 cards each): Norsemen, Scots, Mongol Empire, Byzantine Empire, Ottoman Empire, Holy Roman Empire

❺ **Colored Life Point Counter** for each player *(D20)*

❻ **8 Damage Counters** for each player (D6)

❼ **Resource tokens:** for each player 5 Food, 5 Wood, 5 Gold, 3 Wild resource
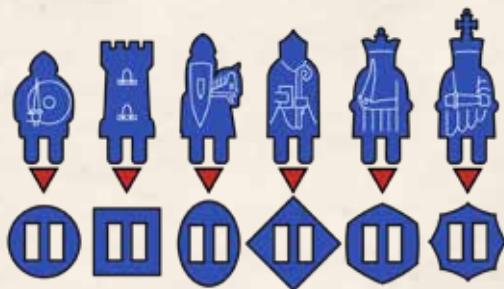
GAME SETUP

Board ❸: Each player takes a starting tile. Choose a map (Highland or Constantinople) and shuffle the corresponding map tiles. Place both starting tiles face-up, with your Capital square in the bottom left from your viewpoint. Fill in the remaining spaces with the shuffled map tiles face-down to create a 3x3 grid. Each player receives a Unit Field ❷ to organize their unit cards.

> For first-time players, we recommend playing on the Highland map with easier civilizations like the Norsemen, Byzantine Empire or Scots.

Civilization setup: Each player rolls a die, whoever has the highest roll decides whether to choose their civilization first or allow the other player to pick first. Each player then selects their Civilization Deck and takes the game pieces in their chosen color. Place your Civilization card on your Unit Field, and the Starting Scout on the first card space ❹. Then, shuffle your deck.

Player setup: Place your deck face-down. Put all your unit pawns ❶ on their designated spaces on your Unit Field. Place your Capital on your starting square and the Starting Scout pawn on your Capital. Set your Life Point Counter ❺ to 10 and place it on your Unit Field. Each player takes 1 Food and 1 Wood resource token ❼ and draws 5 cards from their deck. If you are more familiar with the game, you may attempt to improve your opening hand once by **resupplying** (see page 5). Place all Damage Counters ❻ and resources ❼ as a supply next to the board.

Starting Scout

❹
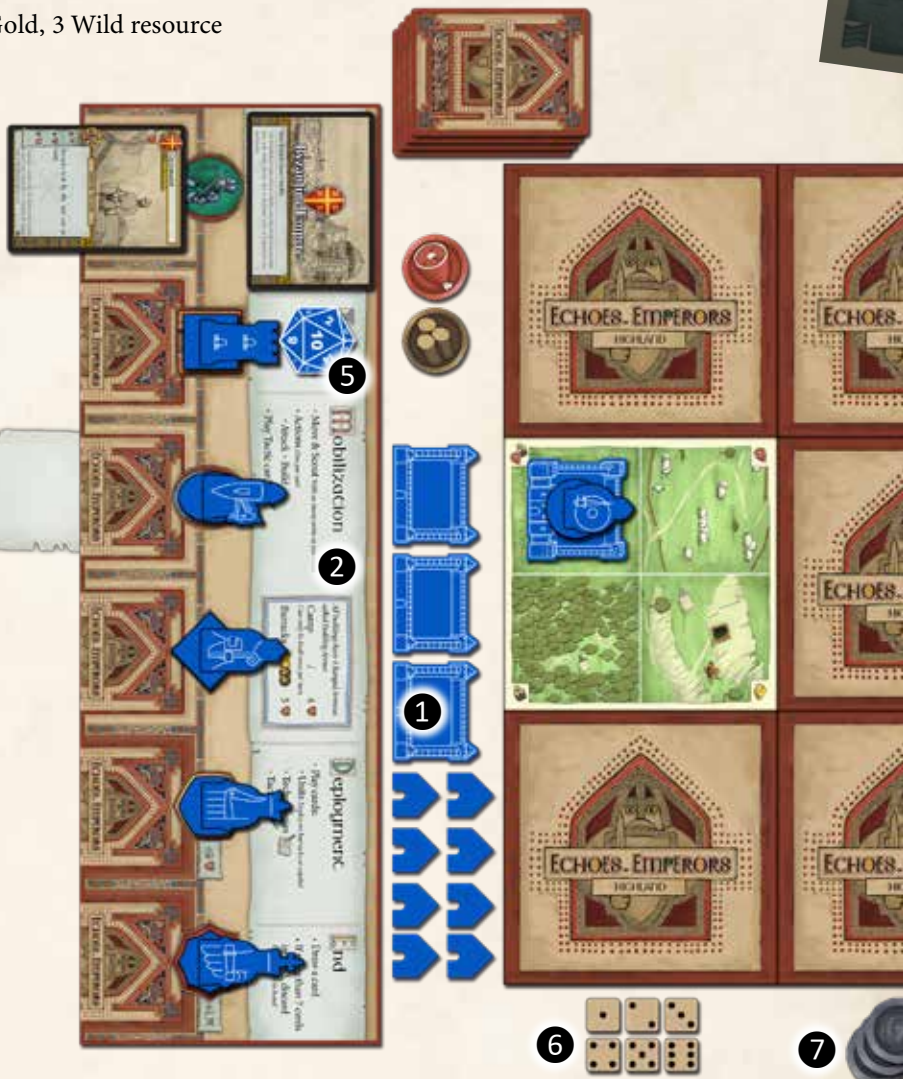
Civilization card

Check the bottom of the tile to see if it is for a 3x3 or 4x4 map.

GAME OVERVIEW

The objective of Echoes of Emperors is to reduce the life points of your opponent's Capital to 0 or eliminate all their deployed units on the map. The game is played in turns, with each turn divided into 4 phases. You can use your Life Point Counter to track your current phase:

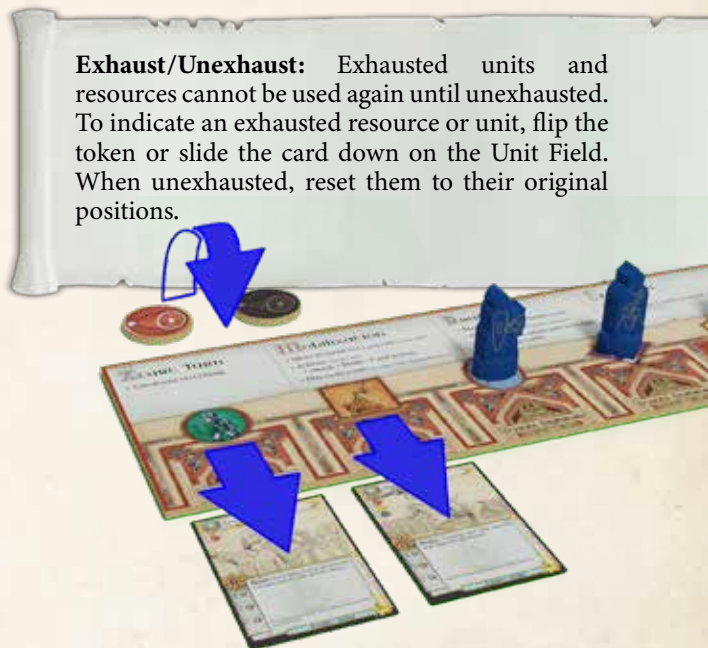**Start of turn:** Unexhaust resources and units.

Mobilization: Focus on the board. Move units and perform actions with them.

Deployment: Focus on cards. Spend resources to deploy units and technologies.

End of turn: Draw up to 5 cards.

Exhaust/Unexhaust: Exhausted units and resources cannot be used again until unexhausted. To indicate an exhausted resource or unit, flip the token or slide the card down on the Unit Field. When unexhausted, reset them to their original positions.

START OF TURN

First turn: The player with the highest roll begins the game. The second player receives 1 Temporary Wild resource, which can be used once as any resource before being returned to the bank.

At the start of each turn, unexhaust all used Main resources and units, making them available again. This phase is skipped on the first turn.

Temporary resources can be used once and must be returned to the bank after use. Unlike Main resources from Camps, which are exhausted when used, Temporary resources are placed on the card that provides them or on your Civilization card. Some cards have a maximum capacity for holding resources, indicated by 'Max. X.' If the card providing the resources is removed, any remaining resources on it are lost.

Silk Trade

ACTION

Gain 1 Temporary Gold.

Husbandman

STARTING SCOUT

INFANTRY

Action: Gain 1 temporary Food. (Max.2)

Husbandmen were peasant farmers or tenants...

The Mobilization phase focuses on **board movement and actions**. The order of this phase is flexible: You may move all units then perform actions with all your units or move one unit, perform its actions, and then move another.

Orthogonal

Diagonal

Multi directional

Movement: You may move each unexhausted unit once per turn, up to the number of squares indicated by its movement stat on the left side of the unit card. The movement stat indicates, how far (movement points) and in which direction (direction arrows) a unit can move. Units must move in straight parallel or diagonal lines (as their movement stats allow) and cannot change direction while moving. Each movement over a square costs 1 movement point.

Scouting: Face-down map tiles are undiscovered. When a unit enters an undiscovered tile, its movement stops on the first square it enters. Reveal and rotate the new tile as you choose. If the first square is water, move your unit back to the first available square. Scouting does not count as an action or exhaust the unit.
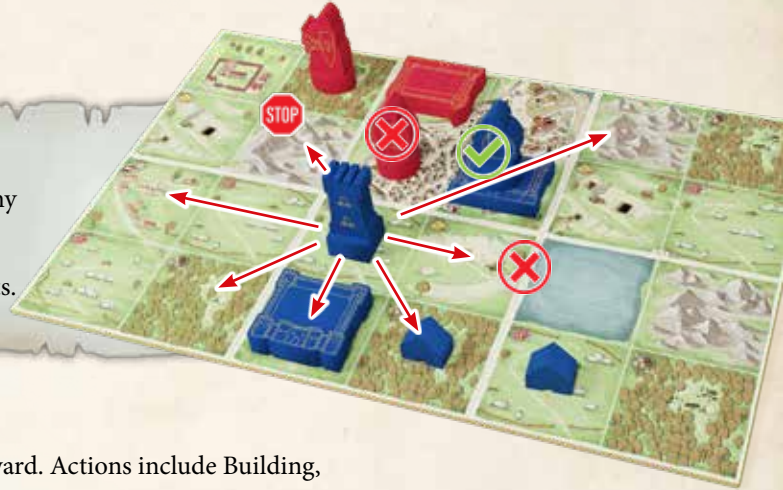
Obstacles:
-Only 1 unit may occupy each square.
-Units **cannot** move over or on enemy units, water, or enemy Fortified buildings.
-Units **can** move on enemy Camps and allied buildings.
-Units **can** move over, but not land on, the same tile as allied units.
-Moving onto a mountain square ends the unit's movement.

Actions

Each unit can perform 1 action per turn, becoming exhausted afterward. Actions include Building, Attacking, and using unique Action Abilities.

Building: Units can construct buildings, which must be placed on the same square as the unit. Only one building can be placed per square. The unit becomes exhausted after building.

Camps: Used to gather resources, Camps can be built only **once per turn** at no cost. Camps provide a resource token based on the terrain. When built, the Camp grants 1 unexhausted resource immediately, which remains with you as long as the Camp stands.
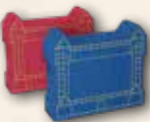
Barracks: You can deploy units on the square occupied by these Fortified buildings. To build a Barracks, exhaust 2 Wood and 2 Gold resources. Barracks cannot be built on water or adjacent to any Capital. If built on mountains, the Barracks neutralize the mountain's movement effect, making the square freely traversable. **Barracks don't provide a resource.**

Relocating: If all your buildings are already placed, you may destroy an existing building and rebuild it on a square occupied by one of your units. The unit becomes exhausted in the process. Relocating a Camp to a different terrain means you must switch the associated resource. Relocating a Barracks requires paying the resource cost.

Resources

Farmland
Food

Forest
Wood

Mine
Gold

Wild resource
(Can be used as any resource)

The center tile of the **Constantinople** map has two squares marked with a double gold symbol, granting double resources when a Camp is built there. This tile starts unscouted and must be explored before use. Its back indicates it must be placed at the map's center.

Mountain Squares end the unit's movement when entered.

Water Squares cannot be moved over unless your unit has the Naval or Ship effects.

River Squares can be moved over by all unit types and count as water for effects that refer to water squares.

Village Squares can be traversed freely. When you have a unit standing on a village square, you can use its action to **resupply** or draw 1 card, exhausting the unit.

Resupply: Set aside any number of cards from your hand. Draw an equal number of cards from your deck to your hand, then shuffle the set-aside cards back into your deck.

Combat

When a unit performs an attack, both the attacking and targeted units are in combat. Units may attack in Melee or Ranged mode. Both players place damage counters (D6) onto their unit card equal to the amount of health the unit has left. After attacking, your unit becomes exhausted.

Health

Changing attack mode: Units can switch attack modes while unexhausted during your Mobilization phase. Vertical card placement signifies Melee mode, while horizontal indicates Ranged mode.

Melee mode: Do damage equal to your unit's Melee attack stat. To attack, the unit must move onto the target's square. If the target unit is also in Melee mode, both units deal damage simultaneously based on their Melee attack stats. This means your unit takes counter damage even if it destroys the target. If the target square remains occupied after the attack, move your unit back to the first available square. If the target is destroyed, and the square is unoccupied, occupy it with your attacking unit.

Minimum damage: Units with an attack value higher than 0 always deal at least 1 damage, even when more damage would be negated.

Ranged mode: Do damage equal to your unit's Ranged attack stat. To attack an enemy target, your unit has to stand in a square surrounding (includes diagonal) the target's square. Units performing a Ranged attack, don't take any counter damage. Units in Ranged mode do not deal counter damage when targeted.
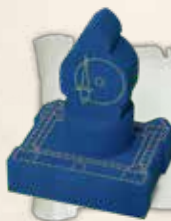
Garrisoned units / Fortified buildings: Barracks and Capitals are Fortified buildings. Units inside Fortified buildings can't be targeted by enemy units or card effects, unless the effect refers directly to garrisoned units; the building has to be targeted first.

Attacking buildings: All buildings have 4 Ranged Armor, known as Building Armor, which reduces incoming damage from Ranged attacks. To attack a building in melee, move your unit onto its square. If the building survives, move your unit back to the nearest available square. If the building is destroyed but an enemy unit remains on its square, also move your unit back. Buildings have the following health: Camps have 4, Barracks have 5, and Capitals have 10 health. Track damage by placing damage counters on the squares for Camps and Barracks, and use the Life Point Counter for Capitals.

Losses: When a unit is lost, discard its card face-up next to your deck to form a discard pile and return the pawn to the Unit Field. Buildings removed from the board can be reused when constructing new ones. If a Camp is lost, remove its corresponding resources, starting with unexhausted tokens, then exhausted ones.

During the Mobilization phase, players may also play Tactic cards by exhausting the required resources.

During the Deployment phase, players can play cards, provided they have enough resources. To play a card, exhaust the corresponding amount of resources displayed on the card cost. During this phase, you cannot move units.

Name and civilization

Card cost

Class

Movement

Card effect

Stat bar

Flavor text

Rarity symbol

Deploying units:
To deploy a unit card from your hand, pay the required resources and place the unit on your Unit Field, attaching it to a pawn of your choice. Position the pawn on one of your unoccupied Barracks or your Capital. If none are free, you can't deploy any new units.

Unit pawns are just visual representations of your unit card on the board. They are all the same except for the King and Queen pawns, which can only be used once, but provide a small boost to the attached unit. When they are killed, remove these pawns from the game.

Queen +2 🤎 **King +1** ⚔️

If your Unit Field is full , you may discard a deployed unit (excluding the King and Queen pawns), including its attached upgrades and damage counters, to free up a space.

Some cards have a flexible resource cost, shown by a greyed-out resource symbol. You can choose any resource to pay this cost.

Technology

Tactic

Technology and Tactic cards: Technologies and Tactics are indicated by the icon next to the technology type. There are 4 different technology types. Technologies have to be played in the Deployment phase, while Tactics can be played during both the Mobilization and Deployment phases.
Some cards have two effects, but you can only use one.

Upgrade
Upgrades can be attached to any deployed unit, but they only provide their effect if attached to the correct unit class. If an upgrade does not specify a class, it can be used with any unit. Upgrades remain active as long as the unit is on the map. Multiple upgrades can be applied to a single unit, but you cannot attach the same upgrade to a unit more than once.

Action
Action cards are one-time use and are discarded immediately after performing the action. Action cards providing Temporary resources are discarded once all resources are used, allowing you to keep them for multiple turns.

Reaction
Reactions must be played during an opponent's turn and are discarded immediately after.

Event
Events remain active throughout the entire game once activated. You can have a maximum of 3 active event cards simultaneously. You may discard your active event cards whenever you want.

END OF TURN

At the end of your turn, if you have fewer than 5 cards, draw up to 5. If you already have 5 or more, draw 1 card. If your hand exceeds 7 cards, discard down to 7. The next player then begins their turn.
Attention: If your deck runs out of cards, you cannot draw any more (do not shuffle your discard pile!). You must continue playing with the cards in your hand and any cards already in play.

WIN CONDITION

Your objective is to defeat your opponent by reducing their Capital's life points to 0 or by eliminating all their deployed units, leaving them with no units on the map. The game ends immediately if either of these conditions is met. The last surviving player achieves victory!
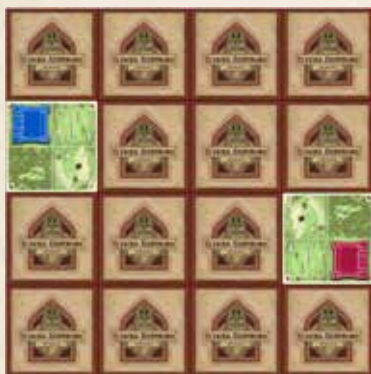
Base game:
This is the best way to learn and experience the core mechanics of Echoes of Emperors. It offers a balanced mix of strategy and game length, making it ideal for new players and seasoned strategists alike. Follow the core rules outlined in this rulebook, with each player starting at **10 Capital life points on a 3x3 map.**

Long game:
Looking for a more in-depth experience? The long game gives you extra time to build your empire and deploy advanced strategies. Players start with **20 Capital life points, playing on a larger 4x4 map** with your starting tile placed in the second space from your left. You need to use both 3x3 and 4x4 map tiles to create the 4x4 map.

4-player team game:
Join forces in this 2v2 mode, where strategy and teamwork are key!
Map setup: The game is played on a 4x4 Highland map, providing plenty of space for each player.
Team setup: Each team starts on the same side of the map, with each player's starting tile placed on one of the middle spaces.
Turn order: Turns alternate between teams (e.g., Player 1, Opponent 1, Player 2, Opponent 2). Roll a die to determine the starting team, and that team chooses which player goes first. The opposing team receives 1 Temporary Wild resource that can be used by either player on their team during their turns.
Shared resources: You can use your teammate's unexhausted resources.
Civilization synergy: Each player selects 1 Civilization Deck to play with. Choose civilizations that complement each other's strengths, as many cards have abilities affecting 'allied units', which include your teammate's units.
'Opponent' card effects: If a card says 'your opponent', you can choose which one of your opponents will be affected by the card.
Victory conditions: If one player loses their Capital or all active units, their entire team is defeated immediately.
Work together to outmaneuver your opponents, balancing offense, defense, and resource management to claim victory!

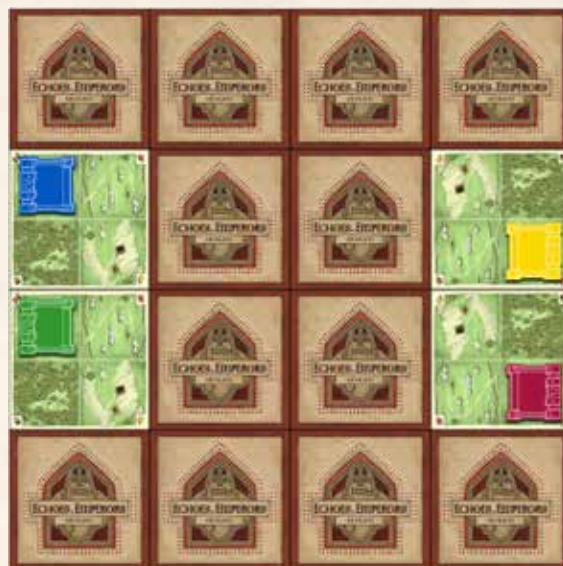## Deck-building: *(Armies and Warmaps Expansion needed)*
When creating your deck, follow these simple guidelines:
Choose 1 civilization: Your deck may only include cards from that civilization.
Deck composition: Each deck consists of exactly 35 cards plus 1 Civilization card.
Required cards: Your deck must include: 1 Civilization card, 1 Conqueror card and at least 1 Starting Scout.
Card limits: Each card has a rarity symbol on the bottom right, indicating the maximum number of copies allowed in your deck. For example, a card with the symbol III can be included up to 3 times.

CREDITS

Keywords

Here is a list of the common effects you might find while playing Echoes of Emperors.

+X 🤎 **:** *This unit has +X health. If this unit has taken damage, its current health increases by X as well (without removing existing damage).*

Anti [Class] X: *The unit has +X ⚔️ or +X 🎯 against a specific class of units, such as Cavalry, Infantry, or buildings.*

Armor Piercing: *This unit's attack ignores Armor, Ranged Armor, and Building Armor.*

Armor X: *The unit or building takes X less damage during combat (applied to Melee and Ranged attacks). If a unit or building receives armor from multiple sources, the values are added together.*

Battering X: *The unit has +X ⚔️ or +X 🎯 against buildings and Siege units. If this unit attacks a building or Siege unit, it ignores armor.*

Charge X: *After moving 2 or more squares this turn, the unit has +X ⚔️ against units.*

Fatigue: *After performing an attack, this unit remains exhausted next turn.*

Front-Line: *Can stand on squares with 1 other allied unit. Front-line units must be targeted first.*

Heavy Ship: *Can only move on water. Allied units may move over water squares this unit occupies. Deploy this unit onto a water square surrounding one of your units.*

Intimidation: *The unit does not take counter damage when attacking.*

Light Ship: *Can only move on water and surrounding squares. Deploy this unit onto a water square surrounding one of your units.*

Long-Range: *The unit can attack from 2 squares away with Ranged attacks, dealing -1 🎯).*

Naval: *The unit can move over water tiles.*

Ranged Armor X: *The unit or building takes X less damage when attacked with Ranged attacks. If a unit or building receives armor from multiple sources, the values are added together.*

Recruit: *Action: Draw 1 card, exhausting this unit.*

Regenerate: *The unit heals 1 damage at the start of your turn.*

Riposte X: *When targeted, you do +X counter damage.*

Short-Range: *Cannot attack diagonally with Ranged attacks.*

War Cry: *All allied units on surrounding squares have +1 ⚔️*

Charge

Charge damage

No Charge damage

Long-Range

Squares that can be attacked using Long-Range Damage 🎯 -1

Card vocabulary

When attacking: When one of your units attacks an enemy unit.

When targeted: When your unit is being attacked.

Adjacent: Squares directly next to a unit, including up, down, left, right, and the center square (not diagonal).

Surrounding: All squares around a unit, including diagonal, adjacent, and the center square.

True damage: The unit takes damage to its health points ignoring any protection provided by armor and effects that lower the amount of damage a unit takes.

Tiles / Squares: Tiles make the map, each tile contains 4 squares.

Unoccupied square: A square open for movement and unit placement, free of obstacles such as other units, enemy Fortified buildings, or water.

Wild resource: A Wild resource token can be used as any resource.

Resource of choice: When a card says 'resource of choice', you have to choose 1 of the 3 main resources.

Allied: Your units and buildings, as well as those of your teammate in 2v2 games.