

GLADIATORI

During the Roman Empire, gladiatorial combat was the most popular form of entertainment. Fighters from all areas of the Empire fought in the shows; including female gladiators, wealthy Roman citizens, and in some cases, even aristocrats. Now the time has come for you to gain the immortal glory of the Arena. Fight for honor, for fame, and for your life! *Gladiator* is a card-driven game in which each player assumes the role of a gladiator in the Ancient Roman Empire. Action selection drives figure movement on the board. Combat cards give energy to the character's actions and are used as hit points. Characters are customizable, and each player has to choose his deck composition, character skills, and Arena items. At the end of the game, the winner will be determined by victory points – or simply by being the only one left alive!

Aim of the game and Duration

The players are fighters that clash in the Arena during the Ancient Roman Empire. The aim of the game is to become the most famous Gladiator in Rome. Fame and glory are measured by Victory Points (VP) which are acquired by fighting with honor and defeating other gladiators. Conversely, VPs are deducted for cowardly or dishonorable behavior!

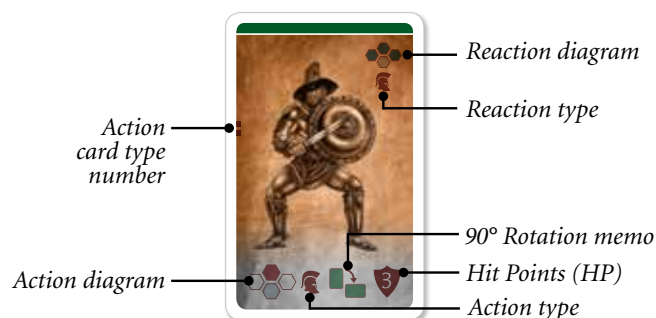
A game lasts 6 turns or ends immediately when all players except one are eliminated (or when a team is eliminated). At the end of the game, the player with the most VPs (or the team with the most combined player VPs) is the winner. In the case of tie, the player with the most hit points wins. In the case of a further tie, there is an *ex-aequo* victory (a draw).

The game consists of character creation, followed by the combat. To learn how to play the game or for a quick start, you can skip character creation and use pre-made characters (see page 11).

Characters traits

Characters are defined by the composition of their card Deck, Skills, Abilities, and Powers. The player deck is composed of:

Action cards (green back - green line)

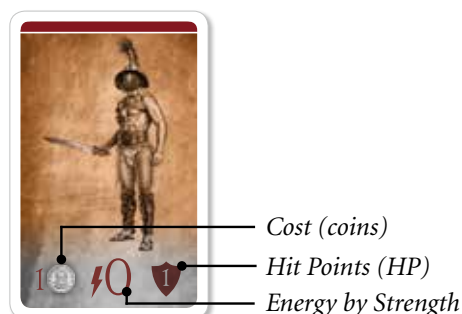


Action cards define the Action taken by the character. There are 4 different Action types: **Strength** (🗡️), **Dexterity** (🦋), **Berserk** (🏰) and **Movement** Action. Each Action card may also be used as a Reaction when a player is attacked. Thus there are 4 different Reactions: **Block** (Strength), **Parry** (Dexterity), **Oppose** (Berserk), and **Dodge** (Movement).

Action cards also display a specific number of hit points (HP): a player can remove the card from the game to “pay” that amount of health when damage is sustained.

Each player receives a set of the 4 Action cards at the beginning of the game.

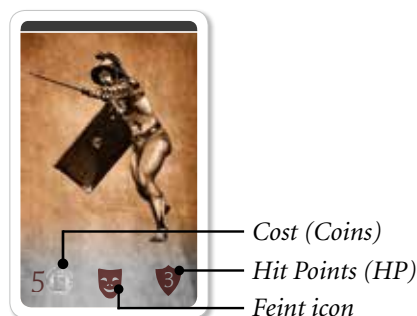
Energy cards (red back - red line)



Energy cards are used to give energy to the player Action. They are in two energy levels: either 0 or 1. They represent the **Strength** that character puts into an action when they are played on the game table over an Action card; or they represent the character's **Dexterity** when they are held in the player's hand. When used as Strength, use the value depicted on the card; when used as Dexterity, count half the number of Energy cards in your hand — the values don't matter.

Like other cards, they can be removed from the game as hit points to pay for damage. Energy cards are bought in character creation, or pre-assigned to pre-made characters.

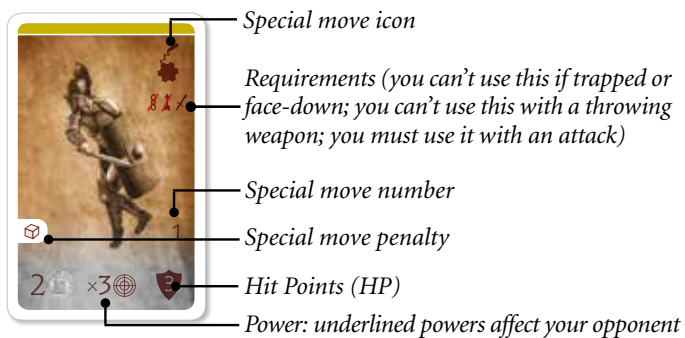
Feint card (red back - black line)



Feint cards are used to make a **false attack** (or a false defense in reaction to a false attack). They are useful to exhaust the opponent.

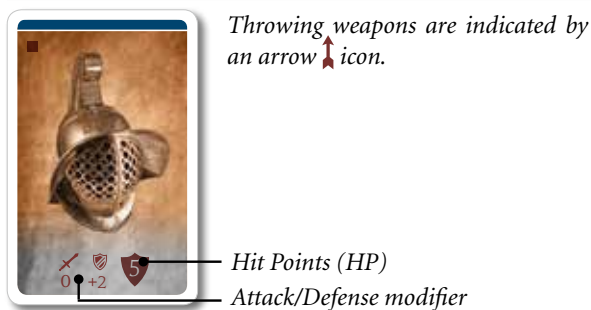
Like other cards, they can be removed from the game as hit points to pay for damage. Feint cards are bought in character creation, or pre-assigned to pre-made characters.

Special Move cards (red back - yellow line)



Special Move cards are played during character Action or Reaction, and each card identifies a **particular power**. Like other cards, they can be removed from the game as hit points to pay for damage. There are 8 types of Special Move cards. They can be bought during character creation, or are pre-assigned to pre-made characters. Each player can only have one of each type of Special Move card.

Item cards (blue back - blue line)



Item cards provide a modifier to the character Attack and Defense or they can use for special attacks (e.g. throwing weapons). Like other cards, they can be removed from the game as hit points to pay for damage. Item cards are assigned to the characters before the game starts (see Items section).

Skills

Character Skills are of 3 different types: **Offense**, **Guard**, and **Endurance**. Each skill can have a value from 0 to 9 and provides a bonus to the player Actions (Offense and Guard) or is used to recover used Primary Character Elements ; discarded cards and/or Skill points spent.

Using a Skill is always optional. Each time a Skill is used, its current value is added to the Action, and then its current value decreases by 1 point. It is **not** possible to use a Skill twice at the same time to double the effect.

EXAMPLE: A current Offense value of 5 gives +5 to the Attack score. After it's used, the value drops to 4.

A brief summary of the skills is shown here: they are described in more detail later in the rules.

Offense provides a bonus to the Final Attack Value. It can be used when the player attacks.

Guard provides a bonus to the Final Defense Value. It can be used when the player is attacked.

Endurance allows the character to recover used Primary Character Elements (Skill points, but not Endurance itself, and/or discarded cards) during the Rest Phase.

A Skill value may never exceed 9 (except with the *OverSkill* special move). Each time a Skill point is spent, the player must update his

character sheet. Points in each Skill are bought during character creation, or are pre-assigned to pre-made characters.

Abilities

There are two kind of Abilities: **Blood** and **Speed**. Both are defined as a number of points that may be spent during the game. These points are bought during character creation, or are pre-assigned to pre-made characters.

Blood points allow a player to reactivate used Action cards and to improve the Berserk Action.

Speed points allow a player to make additional movement and to improve a Dodge Reaction.

Abilities differ from Skills in the following ways:

- It is possible to spend multiple Ability points at once. For EXAMPLE, the Blue player has 7 Blood points. He uses 3 Blood points in a Berserk attack: His Blood value drops to 4.
- They decrease proportional to the amount used.
- They cannot be recovered by Endurance, but only by doing a "Standby Action".

Ability values range from 0 to 9 points. Each time an Ability point is spent, the player must update its value on his character sheet.

Powers

Powers give special characteristics to the player's character, but each can be used only **1 time during the entire game**. There are 9 different powers available. They are bought during character creation, or are pre-assigned to pre-made characters. Powers are represented on the character sheet by icons: players can put a dot over the icon to show their available Powers and cross the icon out when they use it. Powers are described later in the rulebook.

Definitions

Front: the three hexes in front of the character (A-B)

Directly in front: the single hexagon in front the character (A).

Behind: the three hexagons to the rear of the character (C-D).

Directly behind: the single hexagon behind the character's back (D).

Melee combat: when two character miniatures are in adjacent hexes and at least one is in front of the other.

Character Elements : Cards, Skill points, and Ability points.

Primary Character Elements : Cards and Skill points.

Combat cards: all red-backed cards.

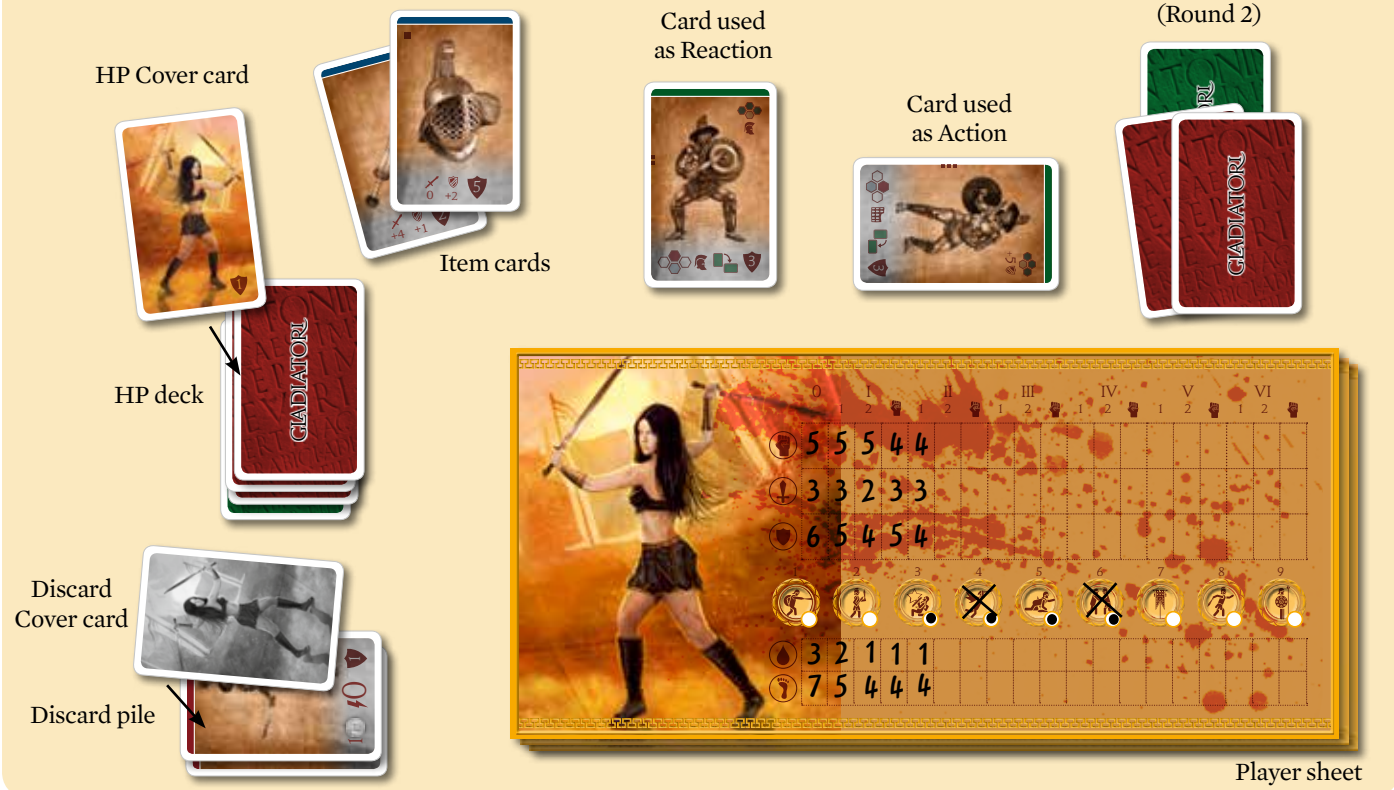


Game Set up

Each player chooses a character (pre-made or created) and the related card deck. Then he takes the matching player screen and sheet, miniature, two character cover cards (color and b/w), an Action card Set, and the token of the color he wants to represent him. The player screens are used to hide player sheets during the game. Place the Arena board in the center of the table. Randomly determine player order for the first turn. Place a marker of each player color on the 10 position of the VP track, stacking them in player order: the first player on top, then the second, etc. In player order, each player places his miniature on a different Are-

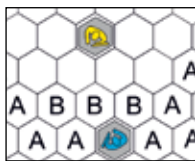
Table organization

This is an example of player organization during play.



na starting position (marked by an icon).

OPTIONAL RULE: Experienced players can choose any position on the board, leaving at least 2 empty hexes between their miniature and any opposing miniature. In the example on the right another Blue Team player has to place his miniature. Hexes marked B are not legal because they would leave only 1 hex between an opponent (Yellow) and them. Hexes marked A are legal because they would leave 2 hexes between the opponent (Yellow) and them.



Turn sequence

Each turn contains 7 phases. Each phase is done by players at the same time, with the exceptions of the Combat Round phases, which are done in player order.

1. Choose Cards.
2. Player Order.
3. Combat Round 1:
 1. Extra Movement
 2. Action
 3. Add Cards to Action
 4. Fight Declaration
 5. Reaction
 6. Add Cards to Reaction
 7. Action Resolution
4. Player Order.
5. Combat Round 2: same as Combat Round 1.
6. Rest.
7. End Turn.

Choose Cards

From his deck of cards, each player chooses which ones he wants to have in his hand. Any number of cards can be chosen. Cards in hand provide actions (Action cards — green-backed), energy, and/or Special Moves, and/or Feints (Combat cards — red-backed). The cards not chosen are added to his Hit Point deck to provide HP. Thus, each player has to choose each turn whether he wants more power for his actions and fewer hit points, or more hit points and less power.

Player order

Players act in increasing VP order (the player with the least VP acts first): Simply use the VP track to visualize it. In case of a tie, the upper marker in the stack is the first in the order. When you move your VP marker during play, move your VP marker accordingly, but leave it just off the track, to make it clear that you already went. At the end of the combat round, put everyone's markers back on the track.

Combat Round

Combat will be explained below, after the End Turn phase.

Rest

Each player moves any Action cards he played this Turn into his discard. If (and only if) the player uses his Endurance skill, the value of the character's Endurance Skill is the number of Primary Character Elements (Skill points and/or discarded cards) that he player can recover.

Each player may choose whether to use his Endurance Skill. If he does, reduce the character's Endurance value by 1 point. Recovered cards are freely selected from the discard pile and go back into the player deck; the new Skill values are marked on the player sheet.

EXAMPLE: *The Blue player has 6 cards in his discard pile and has 4 Offense points left (maximum of 6). He has 4 Endurance points. He*

uses the Endurance Skill (which drops to 3) and he gets to recover 4 Primary Character Elements. He recovers 3 cards from the discard pile and increases his Offense value back to 5.

NOTE: The Endurance Skill itself cannot be recovered with a Rest. Also, a Skill cannot be recovered beyond the initial value.


End turn

Combine any cards remaining in your hand with your Hit Point deck to form the new deck for the next turn. After six turns the game ends.

Combat Round

There are two combat rounds in each turn. The steps of each round are performed completely in player order: the first player does all steps, then the second player, and so on. When all players have done the steps, the round ends.

There are 3 principles governing the combat round sequence:

- In his combat round the player can do 1 Action, or can Pass. To do an Action he can play from his hand 1 Action card or re-use an his Action card already on the table. The attacked player can do the same to defend (to do a Reaction).
- A single Action card can be used only 1 time per turn to do an Action, but the same card can be used many times to do Reactions. When the player takes the Action, he has to rotate the Action card 90 degrees to show that he has taken his Action for this turn (as symbolized on the card with the icon ).
- The first time a player uses an Action card, when he plays it on the table, has no cost. Further uses, when the card is already face-up on the table, cost Blood points.

Combat round steps

1. **Extra Movement.** The player can spend Speed points to move his miniature: each point spent allows 1 additional hex of movement. This movement works like normal Movement (see Movement Ac-


tion). Update the Speed value on the character sheet.

2. **Action.** The player can take 1 Action or alternatively “Pass” his combat round. To do the Action, he has to play a new face-down Action card from his hand, to the right of any other Action cards he’s played this turn; or re-use his not-rotated Action card already on the table. Reusing a card from the table costs Blood points depending on its position: the card in the right-most position costs 1 Blood point, the second card from right to left costs 2 Blood points, the third 3 Blood points, the fourth 4 Blood points.

For EXAMPLE, during the first combat round the Blue player does a Strength Action, plays the card on the table and rotates it 90°. Then the Yellow player attacks the Blue player: to react to the attack the Blue player can re-use the Strength Action paying 1 Blood point or play a new card. He plays a new card, a Dexterity Action, and puts the card straight on the table and uses it as Reaction. During the second round, to do his Action the Blue player can re-use the Dexterity Action paying 1 Blood point or play a new card; he cannot re-use the Strength Action as it is already rotated. He re-uses the Dexterity Action, pays 1 Blood point and rotates the card 90 degrees. Then the Blue player is attacked by the Green player. He can re-use the Dexterity Action, paying 1 Blood point, or re-use the Strength Action paying 2 Blood points, or play and use a new card from his hand.

NOTE: If the player doesn’t have Action cards available and cannot re-use his cards on the table, he has to “Pass”. Passing a combat round puts the player in a Passive condition (see Passive Condition Section).

3. **Add Cards to Action.** The player can play any face-down Combat cards (red-backed card) onto his Action card; there are:

- **Energy cards.** These cards can provide energy to a Strength Action, as shown by the Strength symbol  on the Action card, and can provide damage points if the attack is successful.
- **Special Move cards.** These cards give particular powers to the player Action.

4. **Fight declaration.** The player can declare an attack either against an opponent or to help an ally. If there is a fight declaration, contin-

The Arena board

Place this board in the center of the table as player miniatures will be moved on the grid.

The player order is the reverse of the VP order: the player with fewest points goes first.

When a player scores VP, move his VP marker accordingly, but leave it just off the track, to make it clear that he already went. At the end of the combat round, put everyone’s markers back on the track.

In the EXAMPLE, the first player is Green, then Blue, then Yellow (Red already went): When two players have the same VP score the first player is the one with the VP marker on top.

Starting position

VP track



ue with Step 5; if not, go to Step 7. **NOTE:** If the player uses the Special card *Sweep*, he can attack more than one opponent. In this case he must immediately reveal the *Sweep* card and declare his targets.

To **help an ally** the player must be in melee with the same opponent as his ally. In this case, instead of attacking, he can give a bonus to his ally: The player has to calculate his Final Attack Value as in a normal attack, but instead of using it in his own attack, it will be added as a bonus to his ally's next Attack or Defense against the same opponent. The bonus is +1 for each 4 points of the player's Final Attack Value. *For EXAMPLE, the Blue player wants to help his ally against the Yellow player. He makes a Dexterity action resulting in a Final Attack Value of 15: He gives a +3 bonus to his ally, who is facing the same opponent.*


NOTE: You cannot help an ally by attacking his opponent from behind. The bonus expires if not used in the next Action.

5. Reaction. The defending player(s) can immediately React to the attack: he can use a face-up Action card already on the table (rotated or not-rotated) or play another face-down Action card from his hand and use this one. In the first case, to re-use a card from the table costs Blood points: the right-most Action card costs 1 Blood point, the second card from right to left costs 2 Blood points, the third 3 Blood points, the fourth 4 Blood points.

The defender's action card type defines what kind of Reaction the player can do: Dodge, Parry, Block, or Oppose.

NOTE: Reaction is not mandatory. The player can also choose to "Pass" without playing or using any card and to be Passive (see Passive Condition Section).

6. Add Cards to Reaction. A Reacting player (i.e. not a Passive one) can play face-down Combat cards onto his Action. There are:

- **Energy cards.** These cards can provide energy to the Block Reaction, as shown by the Strength symbol .
- **Special Move cards.** These cards give particular powers to the player Reaction.

7. Action resolution. If a fight was declared, a **Fight Resolution** starts (see below). If not, the player simply reveals his cards and takes his Action.

After that, the player Combat round **ends** and the players involved update their Offense and Guard value, their Speed and Blood points, and Powers used. New Trapped and/or Unbalanced markers are effective in this moment. **Then they put all Combat cards played on their discard piles. Their Action cards stay in play until the end of the turn.** Each player's discard pile is covered by his discard cover card (the b/w one) to make it easy to identify it.

Fight resolution

The attacker shows his played cards and determines his Final Attack Value, announcing it to the defender. Next, the defender does the same with his Final Defense Value. **Note:** Players don't need to announce how their Final Value has been determined (sheet values have to remain secret). The attacking player calculates his **Final Attack Value** by summing:

- (if allowed) the Strength or Dexterity or Berserk bonus
- the attack bonus of his items
- (if he wants) the value of his Offense Skill (if he chooses to add his Offense Skill to his Attack Value, the Skill drops by 1 point thereafter)
- (if there) the ally bonus
- any Status modifier (Trapped, Face-down)
- any Special Move/Power modifier

NOTE: The Final Attack Value has to be positive (+1 or more) in order for the attack to be taken into account. If it is not positive, this attack is null.

The target character (defender) calculates his **Final Defense Value** by summing:

- (if is defending with Block or Parry) the Strength or Dexterity bonus, or (if is defending with Oppose) +5 bonus
- (if is defending with Dodge and is using Speed points) the Speed point Dodge bonus.
- (if there) the +5 Action vs Reaction matching card bonus
- (if the attacker is not attacking with a Net and if the defender is not using Dodge) the defensive bonus of his items.
- (if he wants) the value of his Guard Skill (if he chooses to add his Guard Skill to his Defense Value, the Skill drops by 1 point thereafter)
- (if there) the ally bonus
- any Status modifier (Trapped, Face-down)
- (if attacked from behind) -3 penalty.
- any Special Move/Power modifier.

NOTE: The Final Defense Value can be negative.

Feint. After the values determination, the attacker can play a Feint card and then the defender can do the same. The Feint card cancels the player Action (or Reaction) as if it were never done. This avoids the consuming of any cards (excepting the Feint card itself), Powers, Skill points and Blood points. **NOTE:** The Speed points consumed in the round to move the miniature or the Blood points consumed to reactivate a card cannot be canceled by a Feint. If no Feint card is played, the fight is resolved and damage points are assigned.

Damage points. If the difference (Final Attack Value – Final Defense Value) is positive, the attacker injures the defender. The number of damage points is equal to:

1 base damage point + half (round down) the number of cards the attacker played, including the Action card (even if reused)

EXAMPLE: The attacker played 3 energy cards on a Strength Action card and has a bonus of +2 due to wielding a sword, and +4 for using his Offense Skill: he has a Final Attack Value of 9 (3+2+4=9). The defender chooses to Pass and is Passive. He has +3 for carrying a shield and +4 due to his Guard Skill: his Final Defense Value is 7 (3+4=7). As the difference is positive (9-7=+2), the attacker successfully injures the defender causing 3 hit points of damage: The attacker played 3 cards onto the Action card for a total of 4 cards played/used = 2 damage points+1 base damage=3).

OPTIONAL RULE: Experienced players can decide to include a bonus to damage points provided in their games. In this case players can add 1 damage point for every 3 points of difference between Final Attack Value and Final Defense Value. *For EXAMPLE with a difference of 7 points, there is a bonus of +2 damage points.*

Injuries and death: If the character was wounded, he has to remove some cards from the game in order to pay for the damage he sustained. He can remove cards from his **HP deck**, and/or remove one or both of his **Item cards**: each card has an HP value, and the total of the cards' HP values must be at least as high as the total damage points received. No change is given, so if a player sustains 1 damage point, and only has cards valued at 3 HP, he will have to remove one of those. The character color cover card is always the last card to be removed from the HP deck, and it is worth 1 HP. If the player has to remove it, no matter how many cards he still has in hand, his character is dead.

EXAMPLE: The Blue player suffers 6 damage points. His HP deck comprises the following cards, in addition to the color cover card: 1 Special Move card and three 2 HP energy cards. He also has 2 item cards in play, worth 3 HP and 2 HP respectively. He chooses to remove the 3 HP item card and two energy cards from his HP deck. The total is: 3 HP + 2 HP + 2 HP = 7 HP, one more than required.

Action descriptions

There are four Actions/Reactions available. Players may also play an Action card to be on Standby instead.

Standby

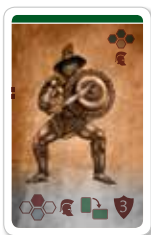
The Player has to play a new Action card, putting it on the table face-down and rotated by 90 degrees. Alternatively, if there are already some face-up straight Action cards on the table, he can choose one of them and simply rotate it 90 degrees and put it face-down.

Thus the chosen card cannot be used for further Actions or Reactions in the current turn and the player renounces making his combat round Action, but he may recover 3 Character Elements (discarded cards, Ability points, and/or Skill points). For EXAMPLE, on Standby, a player can take back 2 cards from his discard pile and recover 1 used Blood point.

Strength Action

As an Action, the character can attack a target that is in the hex directly in front of him as shown by the action diagram. The character gains a +1 bonus to the attack for each energy on the Energy cards played (Strength bonus).

EXAMPLE: The player plays 3 Energy cards on a Strength Attack action: each card provides 1 energy. The bonus on Attack is +3.

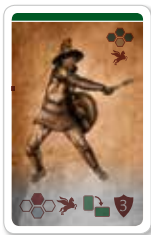


As a Reaction, the character can try to **block** a single attack adding his Strength bonus to his defense, but only if the attack comes from one of the hexes in front of his miniature as shown by the reaction diagram.

Dexterity Action

As an Action, the character can attack a target that is in the hex directly in front of him as shown by the action diagram. The character gains a bonus on Attack equal to half the total number of cards in his hand rounded down (Dexterity bonus).

EXAMPLE: The player has 7 cards in his hand (2 green-backed and 5 red-backed). The bonus on Attack with a Dexterity Action is +3.



As a Reaction, the character can try to **parry** a single attack adding his Dexterity bonus to his defense, but only if the attack comes from one of the hexes in front of his miniature as shown by the reaction diagram.

Movement Action

As an Action, the character can move in any direction 1-3 hexes. It is not possible to move into a hexagon occupied by another character. The character can be rotated by 1 hex side (60 degrees) after each hex moved.

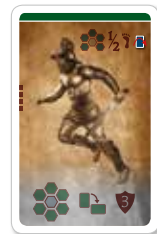
NOTE: It's possible to move into all hexes of the Arena, including par-

tial hexes. It's also possible to spend 1 Movement to simply rotate the miniature by 1-2 hex sides, without moving.

As a Reaction, the Movement action card allows the character to **dodge** a single attack halving the attacker's Final Attack Value (rounded down), but only if the attack doesn't come from directly behind the character's position, as shown by the reaction diagram. In this case the player cannot apply Item defensive bonus to his Final Defense Value, but can add a +2 bonus for each Speed point spent in the dodge reaction (max +4 bonus).

NOTE: The miniature stays where it is. The Dodge Speed bonus can be decided after knowing the Final Attack Value.

EXAMPLE: the Blue player attacks the Green player with a final Attack value of 13. The Green player reacts dodging with a Movement Action: Blue's final Attack value drops to 6.



Berserk Action

As Action, the character can attack a target that is in the hex directly in front of him as shown by the action diagram. The character gains a +2 bonus to the attack for each Blood point spent up to a maximum of +6 (Berserk bonus).

As a Reaction, the Berserk action allows the character to **oppose** a single attack, but only if the attack comes from one of the hexes in front of his miniature as shown by the reaction diagram. The character gains a +5 bonus to the defense.

For EXAMPLE, the Blue player attacks the Yellow player with a Strength Action with a Final Attack Value of 10. The yellow player reacts with a Berserk Action: his Final Defense Value is 12 (4 Skill value, +3 Item bonus, +5 Oppose bonus = 12) and the attack is unsuccessful.



Action vs Reaction matching card bonus

If in a Fight the defender uses the same card type as the attacker, he gains an additional +5 bonus to his Defense.

For EXAMPLE, if the attacker uses a Strength Action and the defender a Strength Reaction (Block) the defender gains a +5 bonus.

Items

Items are assigned before starting the game. It's possible to do so in three different ways: with an auction, by drafting, or by selection. The auction process takes more time, but adds additional strategy to the game. The draft method is quicker and easier. The selection method allows players to choose their items directly. In any case, each player starts the game with 2 item cards.

NOTE: It is not possible to have two helmets, two shields, two spears (or a spear plus a trident). This concept is represented on the card by three symbols: ■, ▲, ●. A player cannot have two cards with the same symbol. If that somehow happens one item must be removed from the game and the player will have to play with only 1 item; however, any other combination is possible.

NOTE: A player who does not acquire a weapon item can still attack without any penalty: The player is always assumed to have some sort of standard weapon (dagger).

Auction Method. The Item cards are shuffled and one is laid face-up on the table. Each player makes a secret bid by placing some of his Energy cards face-down on the table covering them with his hand (it's possible also to bid zero cards). When all the players are ready the bids are revealed and the player who bid the most total energy (total of all cards) wins the card.

For EXAMPLE, a bid of two 1-energy cards wins against three 0-energy cards.

In case of a tie, the item card goes to the player who bid the greatest number of cards. In case of further ties, the item is not assigned, and is removed from the game. The player who wins the auction puts the cards that he bid to one side. The auctions continue according to the number of players (2 item auctions per player).

At the end of all auctions, each player puts the cards used as bids in his discard pile and starts the game in this configuration.

NOTE: Each player can only have a maximum of two item cards and if at the end of the auctions a player has won more than 2, he must remove from the game any excess.


Draft Method. The Item cards are shuffled, and two per player are laid face-up on the table along with one additional card. Starting from a randomly chosen player and going clockwise, each player selects a card and takes it. Once each player has received 1 card, the last player picks, then go counter-clockwise. The remaining item card is removed from the game.

EXAMPLE: In a 3-player game, 7 item cards are laid face-up on the table. In choosing their first item card, the order will be player A, B, C. For the second item the order will be C, B, A.

Selection Method. This method is useful with pre-made character, as it allows players to choose their 2 items directly from all the available items. Each player chooses his item cards from the Item deck. If multiple players want the same item, it will be assigned in a random way. For a pre-made character the items chosen must always be among the character's preferred item types.

For EXAMPLE, Mirmillo prefers Sword and Helmet: the player playing Mirmillo has to choose items from among all the sword and helmet items available.

Special Weapons

Throwing Weapons are identified by  icon. When the player wants to throw a throwing weapon, he proceeds with a normal attack, but doubles the attack bonus of the weapon.

For EXAMPLE a +3 spear worth a +3 bonus in melee combat, but +6 attack bonus when it's thrown.

Once used, the thrown weapon has to be removed from the game. No throwing weapons, other than the Net, can be thrown if the character is in melee with any opponent. There is a penalty of -1 to the Attack (-2 if the player is using the Net) for each hex between the target and the attacker beyond the first one. It is possible to throw a weapon at any target that is in the attack area (see yellow zone in the example below), if there is a clear path available. To check draw an imaginary line between the center of your hex to the sides of the target hex: if the line does not cross other occupied hexes a clear path is available (face-down characters are ignored):



The Red and Yellow characters are available as targets for the Blue player, but the Grey and Purple are not (the Purple is partially hidden by the Yellow character). To target the Red player costs -3 penalty for the distance.

Net. The Net does not damage the target, but immobilizes it (Trapped). Attacking with the Net prevents the target from using his Items' defense bonuses and it can be also used as a trapping melee weapon when the player is adjacent to his opponent: in this case the Net is not removed from the game when used. In this case the player has to remain adjacent to the trapped opponent, until he is no longer trapped; otherwise the item will be removed from the game after having its full, normal effect on the trapped player.





If the net attack is successful, instead of taking damage, the target becomes Trapped: 3 Trapped markers (gray cubes) are placed near the base of the target miniature. A trapped character suffers a -3 penalty when attacking and when defending, and is not able to do Movement (see Trapped Character under "Character Status" section).

NOTE: A Net attack needs to be declared during the Fight declaration. The Net cannot be thrown with a Sweep Move to attack multiple characters or with a Break Item Move to destroy an Item.


Special Moves

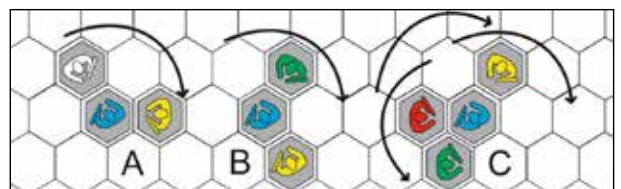
There are 8 types of Special Moves. Usually a character has only some of them available, as they are bought during character creation, or pre-assigned for pre-made characters. Players have to take the Special Move cards corresponding to Special Moves available to their characters.

Players may play any number of different Special Move cards onto an Action or a Reaction, but as the cards are unique they may not perform the same Special Move more than once on each action/reaction. If a Special Move has some restrictions, these are listed in parentheses in the list below and shown on the card with an icon. The restrictions are (the icon is shown on cards):

-  **Movement:** The Special Move can only be performed if the character is neither trapped nor face-down.
-  **Attack:** The Special Move must be performed with an attack Action.
-  **Defense:** The Special Move must be performed with a Reaction.
-  **Melee:** Not available for throwing weapons.


And the Special moves are:


-  1. **Sweep (Movement/Attack/Melee):** This Special Move allows the player to attack up to 3 opponents at the same time. The Sweep can be extended over any 3 adjacent hexes, but one of these 3 hexes must be the one directly in front of the character. The player attack value gains +1 bonus against the first target, -3 penalty against the second target, and -7 penalty against the third target. At the end of his combat round, the sweeping attacker takes 1 Unbalanced marker (white cube).




Some Sweep examples: White+Yellow targets are available (A). Green target is available, Yellow player not (B). Available: Green+Red player or Red+Yellow player or Yellow player alone (C).


NOTE: If there is a friendly target in one of the three target hexes, the friendly target could be damaged. It is also possible to use this Special Move to attack a single target with a +1 bonus, and/or not directly in front of the player.


 **2. Sacrifice (Attack or Defence):** The player can remove 1 card in his hand from the game and gain +3 bonus on his current Attack or Defense.

 **3. Acrobatic Strike (Movement/Attack or Defence):** The player can add +3 to his current final Attack or Defense value, but takes 1 Unbalanced marker (white cube) at the end of his combat round.


 **4. Overskill:** The player gains up to +5 points in a Skill. This bonus expires at the end of the turn, or when the Skill is used: At which point the Skill value drops to 0.
NOTE: It's possible to go over the 9 value, but the maximum number allowed is equal to three times the character's current value.

EXAMPLE: *The Blue player uses Overskill on his Endurance Skill. The Endurance Skill value was 2 and now becomes 6 (2+5=7, but the maximum is three times the initial value). In the Rest phase, the player uses the Skill to recover 6 Primary Character Elements. After that his Endurance drops to 0.*


 **5. Rage:** During the Action resolution the player can substitute the played Rage card with another card from his discard pile or HP deck. When used on a played Rage card the new card is immediately effective.

 **6. Break Item (Movement/Attack/Melee).** The player can try to remove a specific item from the game. The player has to do a normal attack on the item's owner. If the attack is successful, all damage points are applied to the item: If they equal or exceed the item HP value, the item is removed from the game. If not, put a cube marker over the item card to show the item is damaged: When damaged, the item's bonuses and HP value are halved (round down). If the item becomes damaged again, it is destroyed and removed from the game.
NOTE: The attacker has to specify the target item during Fight Declaration. The item is removed AFTER the Fight resolution.

EXAMPLE: *The Blue player uses a Break Item Special Move in a Strength attack against the Yellow player. His target is a Sword with 2 HP. The defender dodges. The Final Attack Value is 18, 9 after dodging, and the final defense value is 4: the attack is successful. Because the attacker played/used 4 cards, he deals 3 damage points (4÷2=2; 2+1=3), destroying the item.*

 **7. Unbalancing Strike (Movement/Attack or Defence/Melee):** This Special Move can be done together with an attack made against a single target or with a defense. The opponent has to spend 2 Character Elements before the Action resolution, or he will take an Unbalanced marker (white cube) to his miniature. If there was already a Unbalanced marker, the target goes Face-down. This Special Move works independently from the attack/defense result.
NOTE: The new Unbalanced marker will be effective at the end of the current player's combat round. It's not possible to add Unbalanced markers to a Face-down character.

EXAMPLE: *The Blue player defends from a Strength Attack by the Yellow player: He plays an Oppose Reaction with an Unbalancing Strike card. The attacker (Yellow), has to spend 2 Character Elements or take 1 Unbalanced marker: he chooses to discard 1 card from his hand (first element) and to spend 1 Speed point (second element).*

 **8. Reflex (Movement):** The player can do 1 free movement after the Action resolution. This movement works like the


normal Movement. If the player wants, he can move more by spending Speed points. If both attacker and defender use this card (or if the attacker is using the Power Wrestling), the attacker acts first. If there is a Sweep, and more than one defender plays this card, they move in the order they would be struck by the Sweep.


Powers


Powers give special characteristics to the characters, but each Power can only be used once per game.


There are 9 different Powers. The Powers are bought during character creation (or pre-assigned for the pre-made characters). Available Powers are shown on the character sheet with a dot over the power icon and the icon will be crossed out when it is used. All powers need to be announced when players want to use them.


Powers can have the same types of restrictions as Special Moves (Movement, Attack, Defense, Melee).


 **1. Lunge (Movement/Attack/Melee).** The player can discard any card from his hand without using it. He gains +2 bonus to his Attack for each card discarded in this way (max +6). The player has to announce this power during his Final Attack Value determination and before knowing the target's cards and Final Defense Value.

 **2. Stand up!** The player immediately removes all Status markers from his character (Trapped and/or Unbalanced markers). This power can be used at any time during the player's combat round.

 **3. Unbeatable.** This power can be used immediately after the death of the player's own character. In this case even if the character is dead, he continues to play until he has the chance to play another full Round (can finish the current one and do another). He gains a +4 bonus to his Defense or Attack for his next Action or Reaction (whichever comes first). **NOTE:** If the player is damaged again, the character is definitively killed and immediately removed from the board without playing the additional Round. In this case VP are awarded only to the first player to kill the character.

 **4. Leap (Movement/Attack/Melee).** For each hex entered prior to the attack the player may take +2 bonus to the Attack or +1 bonus to the damage. Maximum bonus is +6 (or +3). It's possible to combine the two bonuses: *for EXAMPLE, with 2 movements it is possible to gain +2 to Attack and +1 to damage.* The player has to announce this power during his Final Attack Value determination and before knowing the target's cards and Final Defense Value.

 **5. Deep Wounds (Attack).** The player can take a penalty to his Attack and add the corresponding value as bonus to the damage points. The maximum penalty/bonus is -3/+3. The player has to announce this power during his Final Attack Value determination and before knowing the target's cards and Final Defense Value. In a Sweep attack the same penalty/bonus applies to all attacks.

 **6. Wrestling (Movement/Attack/Melee).** The player has to announce this power during his Final Attack Value determination and before knowing the target's cards and Final Defense Value. After the fight resolution, the player can move the attacked miniature from his character's front to any unoccupied/available hex adjacent to the attacked

miniature's current hex. This works independently from the attack result; however it only works if the target is not Face-down or Trapped. At the end of the current player round, the moved miniature takes 1 Unbalanced marker.



7. Adaptation. The player can move up to 3 cards between his hand and his HP deck. This power can be used at any time - including during an opponent's turn or during a fight resolution.



8. Delay. The player can change where he is in the player order or gain +3 bonus to his Defense through the end of the round. This power can be used at the start of the round to change the player order or at any time to gain the defensive bonus - including during an opponent's turn or during a fight resolution.



9. Resistance. The character can recover 3 Character Elements. This power can be used at any time including during an opponent's turn or during a fight resolution.

Passive Condition

The current player is Passive when:

- He chooses to "Pass".
- He doesn't have any Action cards available.

The defending player is Passive when:

- He chooses to "Pass".
- He is attacked from behind (when he defends with Parry, Block, Oppose) or from directly behind (when he defends with Dodge).
- He doesn't have any cards available to React.


A passive character cannot Act or React, cannot play cards, cannot use Abilities and Powers, but can still use Skills and Items' bonuses in Defense.

Character Status

A character can have different Status: Normal, Trapped, or Face-down. Normal Status does not change the character attributes or options.

Trapped character

- Attack and Defense values suffer -3 point penalties.
- The player cannot use Parry, Dodge, and Block. However, Oppose still works.
- Active Movements are not allowed, but it's possible to rotate the player miniature 1 hex side per round (max 1 rotation per round) by spending 1 Movement point. NOTE: The character cannot perform any Special Move or Power which requires Movement.


A character is Trapped as long some Trapped markers (gray cubes) are near the player's miniature. The player has to remove ALL markers to cancel Trapped Status and recover his Normal Status. It's possible to remove 1 Trapped marker during your combat round by spending 2 Character Elements . A Trapped character can also be Face-down: Penalties are cumulative.

EXAMPLE: *The character has been trapped by a net (recall: when trapped by a net, three trapped markers are placed near the player miniature). He spends 6 Character Elements and performs a Movement Action: He uses*

2 Blood points, 1 Endurance Skill point, and discards 3 cards. These 6 Elements (2+1+3=6) are used to remove the 3 Trapped markers, and then the Movement Action is used to move the character 3 hexes.

Face-down character

- Attack and Defense values suffer -5 point penalties.
- The player cannot use Parry, Dodge, Oppose; however, Block still works.
- Active Movements are not allowed, but it's possible to rotate by 1 hex side per round (max 1 rotation per round) by spending 1 Movement point. NOTE: The character cannot perform any Special Move or Power which requires Movement.

A character becomes Face-down when he takes the second Unbalanced marker (white cube). The player has to remove BOTH of these markers to stand up and cancel Face-down Status. It's possible to remove 1 marker during your combat round by spending 2 Character Elements . Put the miniature Face-down on the board to visualize the Face-down Status. NOTE: This means that a character with a single white cube can have either status depending on his previous status: If you add a white cube to a character in a normal state, he is still normal; while if you remove a white cube from a face-down character he is still face-down.

NOTE: It's not possible to add Unbalanced markers to a Face-down character.

Simplified and Light game

A good way to learn the game is play with pre-made characters and play the first turn without considering Special move cards and Powers (*Simplified game*). After the first turn each player takes his Special move cards and adds them to his deck (*Light game*). After the second turn each player adds Powers marking them on his character sheet (*Normal game*).

Victory Points

Victory Points (VPs) are gained for damage done honorably to enemies in combat. VPs are lost for cowardly and dishonorable behavior. A player can surrender during his combat round before using his Action card, simply by declaring it.

VPs which are awarded immediately during the game are:

- +2 VP for each **attack** done against one or more opponents on their front (including attacks not causing damage, such as a Net attack or a Blocked attack, but only if made with a positive Final Attack Value).
- +1 VP for each **damage point** done to an enemy on his front. Only effective damage points count and only if paid from the HP deck and/or with removed Items. EXAMPLE: *The Yellow player has 6 Hit points left in his deck and an item worth 2 HP. He is attacked by the Blue player for a total of 5 damage points; the Yellow player chooses to remove the item (2 HP) and two cards from the HP deck (4 HP) for a total of 6 HP, 1 more of necessary. Blue player gains 5 VPs (+2 VP for the valid attack).* EXAMPLE 2: *The yellow player has 3 Hit points left and no items. He suffers 7 damage points from the Blue player and dies. The Blue player scores 3 VP (+2 VP for the valid attack, +6 VP for the killing blow).*
- +3 VPs to the character who causes the **first damage** (First Blood) in the game (attacks against an Animal or an ally, or from behind or with the net do not count). This bonus can be

- awarded only 1 time per game.
- +6 VPs for inflicting a **killing blow**. If the killing blow is from behind the attacker loses 12 VPs instead.
- 3 VP for each **dishonorable attack** done against one or more opponents from behind (with or without damage).
- 2 VP for each **dishonorable damage point** done to an enemy from behind.
- 2 VP for **fleeing**: moving 2 or more hexes away from his current opponent without approaching another one.
- 3 VP for **cowardice**: turning his back on an opponent without showing his front to another one.

VP bonuses:

- +5 VPs if you **survive** until the end of the game.
- 15 VPs if you **surrender**.

For team games, add the individual VP scores together. In 2 vs 1 game, the team takes -10 VP as modifier to its final score. Negative VPs are allowed.

Campaign Games

It is possible for a player to keep a gladiator from one game to another, gaining experience points (XP) which grant the player extra creation points for their next game.

Experience: At the end of the game, each player scores 1 XP for every 10 VP gained (or loses 1 XP for every -10 VP scored). Victory also gives 1 XP to the winning player (or to the players of the winning team).

Wounded: If a character is killed in a game, but his Hit Points do not drop below -4, he is only considered to be knocked unconscious. He is available again for the next fight.

Death: If Hit Points drop to -5 or less, the character dies and his campaign ends.

Creation coin bonus: For each two XP he has accumulated, the player gains +1 Coin for his subsequent character creation.

Character Creation

Each player has 55 coins to create his character. Coins are used to purchase all character traits and cards. Players can agree to adjust these coins to give a handicap to a better player, or to allow for an uneven match.

For EXAMPLE, in a 2 vs 1 game a good suggestion is to give 70 points to the single player and 55 to each of the ones playing as a team.

Players use coins to buy Character Skills, Character Abilities, Energy and Feint cards, Powers and Special Moves. When this process is finished, players take the Item Cards using one of the methods described in the Items section above.

Character Skills

Single Skill cost depends on the value that the player wants to acquire (the minimal starting value is 3):

Skill value	Cost
3	3 coins
4	4 coins
5	6 coins

6	8 coins
7	10 coins
8	13 coins
9	16 coins

EXAMPLE: 8 points in *Endurance* cost 13 coins.

Character Abilities

Players can buy one-time Ability points (Blood and Speed) for 1 coin each. The minimum starting value for each is 3, the maximum value allowed is 9. *For EXAMPLE, 5 points in Blood and 3 points in Speed cost 8 coins.*

Energy cards & Feints

Cards have a different cost depending of their characteristics. This table shows the cost (in coins), the Strength energy value, and the hit points (HP) for each card type:

Card type	Coin Cost	Energy	HP
Energy card	1	0	1
Energy card	2	1	2
Feint	5	0 (Feint)	3

EXAMPLE: *By spending 19 coins, it is possible to create the following deck: Four 1-energy cards (8 coins), six 0-energy cards (6 coins), and one Feint card (5 coins).*

Energy card & Feints limit: each player is limited to a maximum number of cards that depends on the card type. It's possible to take:

- ×1 1-energy card for each 6½ starting coins you have (rounded down)
- ×1 0-energy card for each 6½ starting coins you have (rounded down)
- one feint card

So, starting with 55 coins, players are allowed to take:

- 8 cards with 0 energy
- 8 cards with 1 energy
- 1 Feint card

OPTIONAL RULE: Skilled players can use a Card Overlimit rule to allow more choices and options: Once all the players have paid for and taken their Energy and Feint cards, they have the option of buying up to 4 more of these cards, only 1 of which may be a Feint. These extra cards cost double.

If only one player wants to exceed the initial card limit, he can simply take up to 4 additional cards from those available. If two or more players want to do that, then in player order each player takes 2 cards of any kind from those available. Next, in reverse player order, each player takes their other 2 cards.

Special Moves

Players may buy the Special Moves they want, but each player can only have one of each. Their cost is:

- Sweep, to attack multiple targets: 2 coins
- Unbalancing Strike, to unbalance the opponent: 2 coins
- Rage, to take back 1 discarded card: 2 coins
- Acrobatic Strike, to gain Attack or Defend bonus: 3 coins
- Sacrifice, to gain attack or defense bonus by sacrificing a card: 2 coins
- Break Item, to destroy an opponent item: 1 coin
- Overskill, to improve a Skill score: 2 coins
- Reflex, to move after combat: 1 coin

Pre-made characters

The Character creation phase is an important part of the game as it allows you to customize your character. This adds variety, strategy and depth to the game. Pre-made characters can be useful to start playing quicker and to learn the game: Below are five pre-made characters for you to choose from. We have abbreviated energy as “en.” below. The number after a Power or Special Move name simply indicates the ID number on the card.



1 card (1 coin) 6 cards (12 coins) 3 cards (7 coins) 0 card (0 coins)

The illustrations (above and right) show the setup for Secutor: 10 cards, 17 Skill points, 10 Abilities points, 3 Powers. The final cost is **55 coins**.

SECUTOR “IN MEDIO STAT VIRTUS”

Endurance 7, Offense 5, Guard 5 (22 coins)
 Moves: Sweep 1, Acrobatic Strike 3, Overskill 5 (7 coins)
 Abilities: 5 Blood, 5 Speed points (10 Coins)
 Cards: 1-en. x6, 0-en. x1, Feint x0 (13 Coins)
 Powers: Deep wounds 5, Wrestling 6, Adaptation 7 (3 Coins)
 Preferred weapons: Sword, Shield

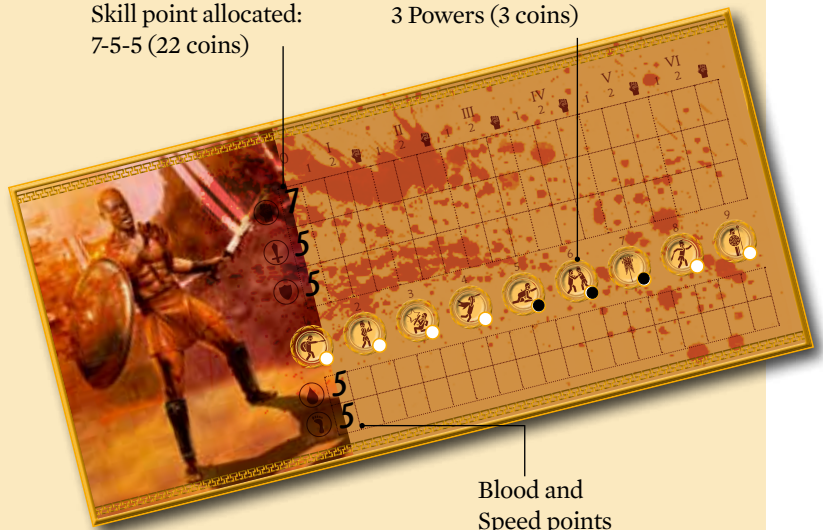
MIRMILLO “THE TIRELESS MAN”

Endurance 8, Offense 4, Guard 4 (21 coins)
 Moves: Sacrifice 2, Rage 5, Unbal. strike 7 (6 coins)
 Abilities: 4 Blood, 4 Speed points (8 Coins)
 Cards: 1-en. x5, 0-en. x7, Feint x0 (17 Coins)
 Powers: Unbeatable 3, Wrestling 6, Resistance 9 (3 Coins)
 Preferred weapons: Sword, Helmet

THRAEX “A BLOODY FIGHTER”

Endurance 5, Offense 5, Guard 5 (18 Coins)
 Moves: Acrobatic strike 3, Break Item 6 (4 Coins)
 Abilities: 8 Blood, 4 Speed points (12 Coins)
 Cards: 1-en. x6, 0-en. x6, Feint x0 (18 Coins)
 Powers: Stand up! 2, Wrestling 6, Resistance 9 (3 coins)
 Preferred weapons: Sword, Shield

Skill point allocated:
 7-5-5 (22 coins)



Blood and Speed points (10 coins)

HOPLOMACHUS “THE SECRET IS SPEED”

Endurance 6, Offense 5, Guard 4 (20 Coins)
 Moves: Sacrifice 2, Acr. strike 3, Overskill 4, Rage 5, Reflex 8 (10 Coins)
 Abilities: 4 Blood, 7 Speed points (11 Coins)
 Cards: 1-en. x1, 0-en. x8, Feint x0 (10 Coins)
 Powers: Lunge 1, Unbeatable 3, Leap 4, Adaptation 7 (4 Coins)
 Preferred weapons: Spear, Helmet or Iron Arm

RETIARIUS “A NET TO BRING THEM ALL”

Endurance 7, Offense 3, Guard 6 (21 Coins)
 Moves: Overskill 4, Rage 5, Unbalancing strike 7 (6 Coins)
 Abilities: 5 Blood, 4 Speed points (9 Coins)
 Cards: 1-en. x4, 0-en. x4, Feint x1 (17 Coins)
 Powers: Wrestling 6, Delay 8 (2 Coins)
 Preferred weapons: Net, Spear (or Trident)

After purchasing a Special Move, players should take the corresponding special move card.

Animal Variant

This variant can be used to play alone (*Solo*), or for two or more players to fight together against an animal pack (*Cooperative*), or in the normal game, to add animals that are free to attack anyone (*Coliseum*).

To represent the animals on the board you can use wooden markers (cubes) or alternatively provide miniatures.

Start. Prepare/Choose your character and place your miniature in a starting hex.

Animal number. The number of animal opponents can be defined by the players: about 5-6 per player is a good starting point for dogs, 3-5 for wolves, 1-2 for lions, and 1 for bears. Players can either choose the number of animals, or randomize it. These numbers should be increased if the players created their characters specifically to fight animals.

How animals come in. For Solo and Cooperative mode, animals enter the Arena during the first turn, round 1. For the Coliseum mode, roll 1d6 at the start of each turn: on a 3-6, 1-3 of the waiting animals will enter the arena (1 animal with 3 as die result, 2 with 4, 3 with 5-6). The frequency and the number of animals can be changed by the players as they wish.

For each animal entering, roll 1d6 to determine the gate of entrance: 1-3 left, 4-6 right. The number rolled is also the number of hexes of the animal's first movement. *For EXAMPLE, the result is 5: This mean the animal comes in the arena from the right gate and moves 5 hexes.*

How they move. Animals always move 1d6 hexes toward a player, choosing the shortest way to reach one. If a hex is occupied by another animal, this animal has to avoid it (the gate hex is an exception, in order to prevent a traffic jam). If an animal can choose between two or more destination hexes roll a die to determine which one it approaches; do the same if there are two or more possible targets of an animal attack.

How they attack. When an animal and a player are in melee at the start of a combat round, the animal attacks first. Roll the dice according to the animal type and situation. Animals use 1d6 when they

move and attack; 2d6 when they attack without moving. The result represents the Final Attack Value and the difference with the player Defense, if positive, represents the number of damage points dealt.

Player order with Animals. Animals are always first in the Player order. If player order between the animals matters, determine their order for the combat round randomly.

Defend from an animal attack. The player can choose to how defend after knowing the Attack result. So first the animal rolls its attack, and then the player decides how to defend.

How they defend and die. When a player attacks an animal, simply roll 2d6 for the animal: the result is the animal's Final Defense Value. If player exceeded this value, the animal is considered killed.

Animal special powers. An animal may activate its special powers when specific numbers are rolled. Some powers may be activated on a roll of **doubles**. Other powers are activated when the animal rolls a **seven**. See the animal description for the specifics of each special power.

VP. In Solo and Cooperative play do not use VP: the players win if they are still alive at the end of the six turns. If this is a Campaign game, and the players win, XP awards for the suggested number of animals should be as follows: dogs, 1 XP; wolves, 2 XP; lions or bears, 3 XP. In Coliseum mode, killing animals provides 3 VP; but merely attacking an animal, 0 VP. Animals do not provide First Blood VP bonus.

Rule modifications. They are:

- Any Special Move, Feint card, or Power can be used as a +2 bonus to attack or defense instead of its normal function.
- The Action vs Reaction matching card bonus never applies to an animal.
- Animals in the net attack with 1 die less. If the die result is 5-6 remove a trapped marker.

Animal Special Powers

Dogs:

doubles: add 1 dog.

Wolves:

doubles: add 1 wolf.

7 (only with attacks): If the player does not Dodge the attack, add an Unbalanced marker to the attacked player regardless of the attack result.

Lions:

general: Lions attack always with 2d6, even when they move.

doubles (only with Attacks): If the player can escape by moving immediately backward, nothing happens (the player needs to have a free hex at his back and 1 Speed point available); if not, the lion doubles the damage points eventually dealt by this attack.

7 (only with Attacks): If the player does not Dodge the attack, the player goes Face-down after the lion's attack regardless of the attack result: Put two Unbalanced markers near the miniature.

Bears:

general: Bears always add 1d6 to their

defense and attack score (when you have to roll 3 dice, roll the first two dice and check powers, then add 1d6 to the result).

doubles: Add +2 to each die rolled.

7: Regardless of the attack or defense result, the player involved in the fight has to remove a player item, or a card from the player HP deck.

Box Contents

Green cards: 16 action cards (x4 per player), 8 cover cards (x2 per player).

Red cards: 32 Energy cards with 1 energy, 32 Energy cards with 0 energy, 4 Feint cards, 32 Special Move cards.

Blue cards: 18 item cards.

Tokens: 4 player VP makers (1 disc in each color), 18 status markers or animal markers (x9 gray and x9 white cubes)

4 **player aid** cards

4 player **block notes (character sheets)**

4 player **screens**

4 **miniatures**

1 **game board**

1 **rulebook**

3 **dice** (6 sides)

Player colors: red, green, yellow, blue.

Credits

Game Design: Michele Quondam

Illustrations: Elia Bonetti e Raffaele De Angelis

Thank you to all playtesters and specially to my "Civetta Game Club" playtester group: without their plays, suggestions, patience and advice, I could never have made this game.

Tips from the Designer

- 3-player game should be always made 2 vs 1, giving a coin bonus to the player who plays alone. Otherwise, one player would just hang back while the other two wear each other out, and then he goes in to easily finish off the survivor (or both).
- Animal variant is really fun, especially in 1 vs 1 games with the Coliseum Variant. Try it! Also Cooperative Variant provides a very different game experience. The Solo Variant can be useful to try out a new character or to learn the game. In addition, don't hesitate to create new animals or monsters.
- Fatigue is the most dangerous aspect of the game: don't forget to have a high score in your Endurance Skill. However, don't disregard Blood and Speed points. Finding the right balance is the essential aspect of the game.



Example of a Turn

Mirmillo (blue) faces off against **Thraex** (green) in the arena, in *Coliseum* mode. In case the crowd gets bored, **two bears** can be heard just outside the arena. They determine randomly that Thraex goes first, and in player order, they choose their starting spaces. The first turn begins.



Choose cards. Both players choose the cards to put on their HP deck. Mirmillo puts 6 cards in his: 2 Action cards (green-backed) and 4 Combat cards (red-backed). Thraex puts 6 cards in his: 1 Action card, 5 Combat cards.

Round 1, Player order. Animals act first, then players.

Combat Round 1: Animal. The animal handler rolls a 3, and therefore releases one of the bears. The bear rolls 3 and enters the arena through the left gate, and moves 3 spaces to come into contact with Thraex to attack him.



Bear Action. The bear rolls 1d6 to attack **Thraex**. It rolled 5. Bears add 1d6 to their attack, so it rolls again: 2. The bear's Final Attack Value is 7. **Thraex Reaction.** Thraex chooses to play his Berserk Action card to Oppose the bear's attack and plays the card straight in front of him (the opponent is an animal, so the player can put the card directly face-up). **Add Cards to Reaction.** Thraex chooses not to add any cards. **Action Resolution.** The bear's Final Attack Value is 7. The defender calculates his Final Defense Value:

Oppose bonus:	+5
Defense bonus of Items: 1 (sword) + 3 (shield)	+4
Guard skill: he chooses not to use it	—

The Final Defense Value is 9. The bear does not hurt Thraex.

Combat Round 1: Thraex. **Extra Movement:** Thraex wants to earn points with the crowd by taking on this bear. He spends 1 Speed point to turn 60° to face the bear.



Thraex Action: Thraex plays his Dexterity Attack card face-up in front of him, planning to take advantage of his handful of cards (he plays his card face-up because he is fighting an animal). He rotates

this Action card 90° to show that it has been used as an Action this turn. **Add Cards to Action:** Thraex chooses not to add any cards to the action. **Fight Declaration:** Thraex declares a fight against the **bear**, but because animals don't play cards in response, he can skip to Bear Reaction. **Action Resolution:** Thraex adds up the following:

Dexterity bonus: 12 cards in hand ÷ 2	+6
Attack bonus of Items: 3 (sword) + 2 (shield)	+5
Offense Skill: 5; it goes down to 4.	+5

Final Attack Value is 16. The animal rolls 2d6 to defend, then adds 1d6 for being a bear: It rolled 5 + 6 + 5 = 16. Despite Thraex' efforts, the bear survives. Thraex leaves his Dexterity Action card in play (rotated) to the right of the Berserk Action (straight).

Combat Round 1: Mirmillo. **Extra Movement:** Mirmillo decides to take advantage of the distraction, and rushes over to attack Thraex from behind. He spends all 4 of his Speed points and turns 60° to face his back.



Mirmillo Action: Mirmillo is out for blood. He plays his Strength Attack card face-down in front of him. **Add Cards to Action:** Mirmillo adds Unbalancing Strike, and all five 1-Energy Combat cards to his Strength Attack. **Fight Declaration:** He declares a fight against **Thraex**. Normally this would mean that Thraex can react; however, because Mirmillo is attacking from directly behind Thraex, Thraex is considered Passive, and can't react. ...but he can still use Skills and Item bonuses. **Action Resolution:** Mirmillo reveals his Strength Attack, Special Move, and Combat cards. He adds the following:

Strength bonus: 5 energy on the Combat cards played	+5
Attack bonus of Items: 3 (sword) + 0 (helmet)	+3
Offense Skill: 4; it goes down to 3.	+4
Special Move: Thraex has to spend 2 Elements or becomes unbalanced.	

Final Attack Value is 12. Thraex decides not to spend 2 Character Elements, and thus becomes unbalanced, which goes into effect after this Action Resolution, adding a white cube near the character. He pulls out all the stops to defend as best he can:

Defense bonus of Items: 1 (sword) + 3 (shield)	+4
Guard Skill: He chooses to use its 5; it goes down to 4.	+5
Attacked from behind.	-3

Final Defense Value is 6. Mirmillo's Final Attack Value is greater than Thraex' Final Defense Value, so Mirmillo deals 4 damage to him as he played/used 7 cards (6 Combat cards+the Action card); $7 \div 2 = 3$ (rounded down); $3 + 1 = 4$ damage). Thraex removes 4 HP of combat in his HP deck from the game: he chooses two 1-Energy Combat cards. Deafening boos erupt from the crowd: Mirmillo doesn't earn First Blood points, because of his dishonorable attack; in fact, he loses 3 VP for attacking from behind, and 2 VP for each damage from behind ($-2 \text{ VP} \times 4 = -8 \text{ VP}$). Thus, Mirmillo loses 11 VP for this attack. He discards all the cards he played, except for his Action card, which he rotates 90° to show that it has been used as an Action this turn.

Round 2, Player Order. Animals always act first. Next is Mirmillo,

because he is behind Thraex on the VP track; last, Thraex.

Combat Round 2: Animal. The bear attacks **Thraex** again, so it rolls 2d6. It rolled snake-eyes (1 and 1); the doubles adds +2 to each die the bear rolls, so that's 6 so far. The bear's General rule adds 1d6 to its attack. It rolled 2 ...+2 due to the doubles. The bear's Final Attack Value is 10. Reaction: Thraex chooses to play his Movement Action card to Dodge the bear's attack, spending 1 Speed point to have +2 bonus (as there is an Animal, he can immediately declare it). Add Cards to Reaction: Thraex chooses not to add any cards. Action Resolution: Final Attack Value is 10.

Thraex defends as follows:

Defense bonus of Items: Not applicable (dodge)	—
Dodge bonus: 1 Speed point used	+2
Guard Skill: 4; it goes down to 3.	+4

Final Defense Value is 6. Dodging halves the bear's Final Attack Value ($10 \div 2 = 5$): The bear does not hurt Thraex. Thraex has now 3 Action cards on the table: the first one (Dexterity) rotated, and the other two, Berserk and Movement, straight.

Combat Round 2: Mirmillo. Extra Movement: Mirmillo already used all his Speed points, so he can't do any Extra Movement. Action: Mirmillo decides to play his Movement Action card face-down in front of him. He wants to maneuver into an honorable position, now that he's gotten a health advantage. Add Cards to Action: Mirmillo doesn't add any cards to the Action. Fight Declaration: He does not declare a fight against Thraex. Action Resolution: Mirmillo reveals his Movement Action card, and spends 2 movement points to move around Thraex and face him, with the Bear to his right. He wishes he had the Sweep Special Move. Mirmillo leaves his Movement card in play and rotates it 90° to show that it has been used. To its right is his Strength card (rotated).



C o m b a t **Round 2:** **Thraex.** Extra Movement: Thraex also wishes he could Sweep, but he doesn't have that option. Although he wants to take out that bear, he can get First Blood, now that Mirmillo has moved in front of him, facing somewhat toward him. He uses 1 Speed Point to rotate his figure 60° to face Mirmillo.



Action: Thraex doesn't have any other Action cards available in his hand because he put the last one in his HP deck. On the table he has from left to the right: Dexterity (rotated), Berserk (straight), and Movement (straight). As he can only reuse straight cards in a Action, he chooses to reuse his Berserk Action to attack, spending 2 Blood points: It's time to swing hard. Add Cards to Action: Thraex adds (face-down) his two 1-Energy and two 0-Energy Combat cards and a Special Move card: Acrobatic Strike. Fight Declaration: He declares

a fight against **Mirmillo.** Reaction: Mirmillo has Strength (rotated) and Movement (rotated) cards already on the table, but no more Action cards in his hand, because he put the other two in his HP deck. He chooses to reuse his Strength Action card in order to Block and spends 2 Blood points for that. Add Cards to Reaction: Mirmillo adds (face-down) his Special Move card Sacrifice. Action Resolution: Thraex reveals his played cards and declares his use of 1 Blood point on his Berserk Attack. He adds the following:

Berserk bonus: 1 Blood point used	+2
Attack bonus of Items: 3 (sword) + 2 (shield)	+5
Offense Skill: 4; it goes down to 3.	+4
Special Move: Acrobatic strike	+3

Final Attack Value is 14. Mirmillo defends as follows:

Defense bonus: 0 energy played	0
Defense bonus of Items: 0 (sword) + 2 (helmet)	+2
Guard Skill: 4; it goes down to 3	+4
Special Move: Sacrifice, Mirmillo opts not to use it	0

Final Defense Value is 6. Thraex wounds Mirmillo, so Thraex deals damage equal to half the number of cards he played/used, rounded down, plus one. He played 5 Combat cards and used 1 Action card; $6 \div 2 = 3$; $3 + 1 = 4$ damage to Mirmillo; because he used an Acrobatic Strike in the attack he takes a Unbalanced marker as penalty, but he already has one, so he falls down after the fight resolution!

To pay for the damage, Mirmillo removes 4 HP of cards in his HP deck from the game: he chooses four 0-Energy Combat cards. The crowd cheers, finally seeing what they wanted: Good, old-fashioned, honorable combat. Thraex earns 2 VP for a successful frontal attack, +1 VP for each damage point ($4 \times 1 \text{ VP} = 4 \text{ VP}$). Because Thraex drew First [honorable] Blood, that's another 3 VP. So, Thraex now has 19 VP to Mirmillo's -1 VP (remember, they started with 10 VP). Now that the combat round has ended, Thraex rotates this Action card 90° to show that it has been used as an Action this turn.

Rest. Each player's used Action cards go into his discard pile. Mirmillo needs to recover some Speed points. Normally he'd have to take a Standby action to solve that problem; however, Mirmillo has the Resistance Power, which he can use one time in the game: He scratches out the Resistance icon on his character sheet, and recovers three Character Elements: 3 Speed points, in this case. ...but he also needs to get some cards back in hand and boost his Offense Skill, so he uses his Endurance Skill to recover 8 things; he reduces his Endurance to 7. He uses 1 of the 8 to restore his Offense Skill from 3 to 4; he uses the other 7 to fish 7 cards back out of his discard.

Thraex is uncomfortable with being face-down with both the bear and Mirmillo ready to pick him apart, so he uses his Endurance Skill to recover 5 cards from his discard; he reduces his Endurance to 4. In his next round he will spend 6 Character Elements to recover his Normal position.

End Turn. Each player takes his HP deck and his hand, and combines them. Now each is ready for Turn 2.



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