

This guide is intended for use by owners of the game looking for a quick outline with a recommended order and structure with which to teach the game. To hear a sample explanation or to learn the game yourself listen to episode #38 of The How to Play Podcast available at howtoplaypodcast.com

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The Hook - What the Game is About

"The capital city of the universe is burning. The humans have finally had enough of the oppressive rule of the Lazax Empire and have revolted. The humans of Sol have attacked Mecatol City itself in an attempt to overthrow the tyrannical Lazax rulers. This is the time for an opportunistic race to seize ultimate power and become the leaders of the galaxy. You will play one of the six major races of the galaxy present in Mecatol City during this revolution. Either the humans from Sol, the defending Lazax empire or one of the other four factions who have been lying in wait for an opportunity such as this.

You will represent

- *The Federation of Sol - Those pesky humans with their notions of freedom and self-importance*
- *The Emirates of Hacan - Lion People who do what lions do best; trade and sell merchandise*
- *The Barony of Letnev - Humanoid people recognizable by how sneaky and creepy they look*
- *The Universities of Jolnar - A race so smart must separate their super smart brains into jars*
- *The XXcha Kingdom - An adorable wise turtle people with thick shells and psychic powers*
- *The Lazax Empire - The evil overlords, with vast sums of cash and impressive giant killing robots*

We will get more into each race later as your race selection significantly impacts your capabilities in this game. But first we will focus on the basic rules of the game, how to win and how the turn works.

The game board of Mecatol City is divided into 28 spaces divided by "roads." During the game players will add units to these spaces, move their units to different spaces and fight to have control of them. Five of these spaces in the corners of the board marked with a red star icon are the most important spaces in the game, these are called "Strongholds."

The game is played to a maximum of eight turns, with each turn involving players adding units to the board, moving their units and fighting if they have units on the same space as an opponent. The game will end immediately if one player is able to control three of the five strongholds at the end of a turn. During the game players will be given an opportunity to form alliances at specific points in the game. A two-player alliance can win the game with control of four strongholds or a three-player alliance that controls all five strongholds will win the game and that race or races will become the new rulers of the galaxy."

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The Meat - How to Play the Game

The Basics of a Turn

1. Bid for Strategy Cards
2. Buy back dead units; "Recruit" using influence
3. Maneuvering units in turn order; Move a group, Place new units
4. Fight on spaces with more than one race's unit tokens
5. See if anyone has won or pass start player marker and repeat

The Most Critical Components

1. Board - Sectors vs Spaces and the 5 Icons
2. Influence tokens - the money of the game
3. Hexagonal Unit Tokens - your troops that mark control and fight
4. Strategy Cards - Cards players bid on that grant special abilities
5. Leaders - one added to each battle, never placed on the board

The Turn in more detail

1. Influence Phase - see where influence is added to the board
2. Bidding Phase - # of Bids = number of players
 - 2.1 Bidding on a face down card
 - 2.2 Start player begins with first bid (minimum 1)
 - 2.3 Hand limit of Strategy Cards is 4, maxed players may not bid
 - 2.4 On 2nd Card, 2nd player in turn order begins bid etc.
 - 2.5 All players passing on ANY card immediatly ENDS THE PHASE
3. Recruitment Phase - In Turn Order
 - 3.1 Get Free # of tokens back based on race
 - 3.2 Buy additional tokens for 2 inf. each (up to a max of 5 total tokens)
 - 3.3 Buy leaders for printed value
4. Maneuvering Phase - In Turn Order
 - 4.1 Move one group of units on the board up to two spaces
 - 4.2 Deploy units to one space (1 each if friendly, 2 each if hostile)

5. Battle Phase
 - 5.1 Report, Choose Strength and Commit Leaders (1 use only)
 - 5.2 Reveal Battle Dials
 - 5.3 Commit Strategy Cards - up to 1 red and 1 blue per battle
 - 5.4 Resolve Strategy Cards - winner may keep/discard, loser discards
 - 5.5 Resolve Battle - turn order tiebreaker, committed & loser troops die
6. Collection Phase - each troop can collect 2, all players collect 2 for free
7. Bombardment Phase - Fleet moves 1-6 sectors, Win?, change 1st player

Other Key Rules

1. Traitor Cards - Select 1 of 4 random traitors to choose from
 - 1.1 Reveal traitor card if he appears after battle dials are shown to automatically win a battle with no casualties and kill the opposing leader
2. Resolving Influence Cards - flip until you get an influence card
 - 2.1 Sol Offensive - Blows up prior influence card location
 - 2.2 Temporary Ceasefires - Make/Break Alliances - (give influence)
 - 2.2.1 Allied players give each other part of their special abilities
 - 2.2.2 Allies only for winning, no coexistence or teaming up
3. Secrecy - Open discussions, no secret messages or revealing cards

The Six Races of Rex

1. Letnev (Sneaky Evil People) - 4 traitor cards, double strategy cards, spaceport control (4 movement instead of 2)
2. Jol-Nar (Brains in Jars) - Peek at strategy cards before bidding, Peek at influence card during moving, forces a reveal in battle, spaceport control
3. Lazax (Evil Empire) - All strategy card bids are paid to you, 5 giant robots equal to 2 strength, start with no troops on board
4. Sol (Pesky Humans) - Move 3, Immune to “Sol Offensive” card, may peek at bombardment, free deployment in 13-17, can win at end of game
5. Hacan (Rich Lions) - Deployment costs are paid to you, Cheap deployment or “teleport” move, you win if game goes 8 rounds and Sol does not
6. Xxcha (Adorable Turtles) - denies card play in battle, baby turtles in Galactic Council, may flip to go into/out of shell, prediction victory

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The Hamster - How to Win the Game

1. Use your resources of influence and troops wisely
 - 1.1 Make sure you have enough influence each turn
 - 1.1.1 Influence is used for card bids, recruitment, deployment
 - 1.1.2 Influence bankruptcy means you can do very little!
 - 1.2 Think before you march your troops into battle!
 - 1.2.1 Remember ALL of the losers troops die, do the math and commit all of the troops you think you need to win
 - 1.2.2 Recruitment is slow and expensive, troops are power!
 - 1.3 Think before you deploy
 - 1.3.1 You do not have to deploy all available troops each turn
 - 1.3.2 Once deployed units are hard to move
2. Strongholds win the game
 - 2.1 Attempt to hold at least one at all times
 - 2.2 Plan on how to control more
3. Ally wisely - Hard game to win by yourself, negotiate to get the partners with the best board position, maintain good board position
4. Good Luck and Have Fun!

Credits:

Game Design (Dune): Bill Eberle, Jack Kitteredge, and Peter Olotka

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Game Publisher: Fantasy Flight Games

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