



# SHADOW THRONE

3 - 5 players. 30 - 45 minutes. Ages 13+.











This is a print and play prototype of *Shadow Throne*.  
The final version will look MUCH better :)

## Background

The empire is crumbling. The king clings to power by any means necessary. The queen has abandoned her husband, leading a rebellion of disgruntled peasants and soldiers to overthrow him. The princess, always devout, has disavowed both of her parents to join the church, whose self righteous leader seeks to rule the kingdom himself.

You and the other players, as members of the secret society known as the Grey Eminence, hold sway over the kingdom, but your job is not to set it right. You want to make sure you're on the winning side when the fighting ends. By carefully weaving Machiavellian alliances and influencing the outcome of crucial battles, you'll ensure that you're on top when the war finally resolves. In the end, the king, the queen, or the princess may wear the crown, but you will rule from the shadow throne.

## Components

54 Character cards (18 for each of 3 factions)  
1 Power Track  
28 gold tokens (20  '1's and 8  '5's)  
30 influence tokens (20  '1's and 10  '5's)  
12 +1 Power tokens   
10 Death tokens   
7 Conversion tokens   
3 Faction tokens   

## Feedback

Thank you for taking the time to check out *Shadow Throne*! We'd love to hear what you think! If you have suggestions, questions, comments, complaints, or really anything to say, please reach out!

Email: [teale@nothingsacredgames.com](mailto:teale@nothingsacredgames.com)

*Shadow Throne* is coming to **Kickstarter** in **June 2014**!  
If you enjoy the game, please share it with your friends and keep in touch!

Twitter: [@nothingsacredg](https://twitter.com/nothingsacredg)


Facebook: [facebook.com/ShadowThroneGame](https://facebook.com/ShadowThroneGame)


Sign up to keep up with *Shadow Throne* news at  
[shadowthronegame.com](http://shadowthronegame.com)


## Credits

Game Design - Teale Fristoe  
Story and Theme - Benjamin Huffman  
Art - Jesse Parrotti


## Game Overview

You and the other players influence characters belonging to different factions, determining the outcomes of battles until the war is over. After the war, whoever has the most  influence wins.

The game takes place over the course of several *battles*. Each battle starts with an *intrigue phase*, where players gain control of different characters. The battle is then fought over the course of four *waves*. In each wave, players add characters to the battle. Finally, in the *conflict phase*, players associated with the faction that wins the battle gain  *influence points*.

Once a player collects 15 or more  influence, the game ends. This usually takes three to five battles.

## Game Setup

1. Give each player 3  gold.
2. Shuffle the Character cards into a deck. Cards from all three factions go into one deck.
3. Place the Power Track near the Character card deck. Put the Faction tokens on the "0" on the Power Track and the other tokens nearby, within easy reach of all players.



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# Steps of a Round

Each round of *Shadow Throne* represents a battle. Before a battle is fought, players make alliances with characters in the *Intrigue Phase*. Players then determine which characters fight in the *Wave Phase*. Finally, the battle resolves and the winners take rewards in the *Conflict Phase*.

## Intrigue Phase

In the Intrigue Phase, players gain control over characters from the different factions by forming alliances with them. Or blackmailing them. Or kidnapping them. Or whatever.

- 1. Reset the Power Track.** Put all three Faction tokens on “0” on the Power Track.
- 2. Shuffle the Character deck.**
- 3. Deal pools.** Deal each player a *pool* of 6 cards face down.
- 4. Draft from pool.** Each player looks at her pool, chooses one card from it to add to her *hand*, and passes the remaining cards to her left neighbor.
- 5. Continue drafting.** Repeat step 4 until all pools are gone.

## Wave Phase




In the Wave Phase, players decide which characters fight in the battle.

Each Wave Phase has **four waves**. For each wave:

**1. Choose characters.** Each player chooses a character card from her hand and puts it face down in front of her. All players do this simultaneously.




- Place characters in later waves to the right of characters in earlier waves.


**2. Reveal characters.** All players reveal their chosen character cards simultaneously.

**3. Collect or pay  gold.** Each player either collects gold if her chosen card has an income (it has a ) or pays gold if her chosen card has a cost (it has a .


- See boxes below for special rules about paying gold.

**4. Resolve special rules.** Activate all special rules for characters in this wave.


- Special rules activate in ascending order. All  abilities trigger, then all , then all .




- Same numbered abilities occur simultaneously. *For example:* all  abilities happen at the same time.




- See the Faction Details section (page 5) for details on how specific abilities work.



**5. Update Power Track.** For each faction, total the  power from all characters in the battle of that faction and put the faction's token on that number on the Power Track. *Note:* Dead characters don't contribute power.

Follow steps 1 – 5 above **4 times**, once for each wave.



**Hush money:** Players don't want to be closely associated with any one faction. After the first wave, if a player plays a character of the faction she played in the immediately previous wave, it costs 1 more  gold.


*For example:* Upset Peasant usually costs 0  gold, but it costs 1  gold if you played a  rebel character in the previous wave.

*For example:* Thief usually provides 2  gold, but if you played a  rebel character in the previous wave, collect only 1  gold. Do not pay 1 gold, then collect 2.

If a player cannot afford her chosen card's  gold cost (or it is illegal to play for some other reason), she reveals it, turns it face down, and collects 1  gold. The character is not considered part of the battle. The player doesn't have to pay *hush money* in the next wave.

- When your character is killed or converted (see the Faction Details section), you do not have to pay any *hush money* in the following wave.

- *Hush money* is not cumulative. If you play three  rebel characters in a row, the third costs 1 extra  gold, not 2.

*Note:* This is not a choice. If you can afford your chosen character, you must pay for and play it; if you can't afford the character, you collect 1  gold and turn it face down.



## Character Cards

**Name.** The character's name.

**Faction.** The character's faction. This is also indicated by card color.

**Power.** The character contributes this much power for its faction. The faction with the most power wins the battle.

**Influence.** The number of influence points the character grants if its faction wins a battle.

**Cost or income.** You must pay this much gold to play the character if it has a cost () or you collect this much gold when you play the character if it has an income ()

**Loss gold.** Collect this much gold if the character's faction loses the battle. Not all characters grant loss gold.

**Special rules.** Character abilities occur after paying for your character.

**Rank.** Some special rules reference character rank. Additionally, rank can indicate how to use a character.

▲ *Commoners* grant gold. They're the backbone of your economy.

▲ *Elites* are powerful and often determine the outcome of a battle.

▲ *Nobles* cost a lot of gold, but offer a lot of influence.

## Conflict Phase

In the Conflict Phase, the outcome of the battle is determined and the victors gain spoils.

**1. Total power.** For each faction, total the power from all characters from all waves. *Remember:* Dead characters don't contribute power.

**2. Determine the winning faction.** The faction with the highest total power wins the battle!  
- If there is a tie, all factions with the highest power are considered winners.

**3. Collect influence.** Each player collects influence points for the characters she played of the winning faction.

**4. Collect loss gold.** Each player collects loss gold for the characters she played of factions that did not win.

*For example:* If a player played an Upset Peasant during the battle, but the rebel faction did not win, that player collects 3 gold.

**5. End the game?** If at least one player has 15 or more influence points, the game ends! Hop down to the "Winning the Game" section below.

**6. Keep one card for the next battle.** Each player keeps one card she did not play from her hand for the next battle and discards the rest.

- The saved card starts the player's hand in the next Intrigue Phase. Do *not* draft saved cards.

- After the first battle, players will save 1 card from the last battle and draft 6 more, so will have 7 cards in hand at the beginning of the Wave Phase.

**7. Form deck.** Discarded cards and cards played in the battle are shuffled back into the deck. It's time to fight another battle!

## Ending the Game

The game ends in the Conflict Phase when at least one player has 15 or more influence points.

## Winning the Game

When the game ends, whoever has the most influence points wins!

In the case of a tie, whoever has the most gold amongst those with the most influence points wins!

If there is still a tie, the kingdom is in ruins and no one wins.



# Faction Details



Each faction has characters with unique special rules.


## Empire

The Bentheions have long ruled the lands of Aclysmia, ever working to expand its borders and solidify their claim to power. Now, with the royal family and kingdom divided, King Kyros Bentheion turns the might of the empire upon those who would usurp him.



### Special Abilities

**Killing.** Many characters in the  empire faction can  kill members of other factions.






- When a character is killed, put a  token on it.
- A dead character doesn't contribute  power to its faction.
- If a character is killed before its ability would trigger, its ability does not trigger.

*For example:* If a  ability kills a character, then that character's  ability doesn't trigger.

*For example:* If a  ability kills a character, then that character's  ability *does* trigger.

- A dead character only grants half its  influence points, rounded down.
- A dead character grants its  loss gold as normal.
- When your character dies, you do not have to pay *hush money* in the following wave (See Wave Phase step 3).



**King Kyros.** King Kyros lets you play an extra  empire card.

- Collect its income  or pay its cost  as normal.
- You do not have to pay *hush money* for the extra card.
- If you cannot afford the extra card's cost, do *not* collect 1  gold. It is not in the battle as normal.
- The extra card is considered part of the same wave as King Kyros. Abilities that occurred before King Kyros' ability do not affect the extra card. However, abilities that occur at the same time as King Kyros' ability do affect the extra card.
- The extra card's ability will trigger, even if it is a  or  ability.



## Rebels

The many conquered peoples of Aclysmia have waged a sputtering and ineffective rebellion for years. Now that the beautiful and shrewd Queen Eleftheria Bentheion has betrayed her husband and the empire by joining their cause, they might actually stand a chance. Without the empire's access to resources and training, the rebels rely on support from one another and the Queen herself to turn the tide of the conflict.

### Special Abilities


**Embolden.** Many characters in the  rebel faction grant extra  power to other rebel forces.

- Place a  token on a character for each  it receives.


**Scout.** A Scout gives  to each other  rebel character in its wave.




**Bold Bannerman.** The Bold Bannerman grants  to each  rebel character in the wave after he is played.



- If Bold Bannerman is played on the fourth wave, his ability does nothing.

**Queen Eleftheria.** Queen Eleftheria gives  to each  rebel  commoner in her wave and all preceding waves.

- Queen Eleftheria does not embolden characters played in subsequent waves.

**Tenacious Veteran.** If Tenacious Veteran's ability triggers and the  rebel faction loses the battle, do not shuffle him back into the deck. Leave him out for the next battle as if you played him in a wave before any others.


- Remove any  or other tokens from him before the next battle.
- He does not stay in the battle if he is  killed.
- If the  rebel faction loses a second battle, shuffle Tenacious Veteran back into the deck.



**Informer.** The Informer prevents characters from other factions in the same wave from using their  and  abilities. Treat those characters as having no abilities.

## Church


As the royal marriage dissolved and the people of Aclysmia were drawn into a conflict between husband and wife, King and Queen, the church officially denounced them both. Church leaders, calling the royal couple corrupt and forsaken, now claim that Princess Beatus Bentheion is the only true and just ruler of the kingdom.


### Special Abilities

**Conversion.** Many characters in the  church faction convert characters from other factions to their side.

- When a character is converted, put a  conversion token on that character. The character is now part of the  church faction and is no longer a member of its original faction.



-  Dead characters cannot be converted.



- A converted character contributes its  power to the faction it is converted to, not to its original faction.

- A converted character grants ▼ influence points if the faction it converted to wins the battle and grants  loss gold if the faction it converted to loses the battle.

- When your character is converted, you do not have to pay *hush money* in the following wave (See Wave Phase step 3).

**Princess Beatus.** Princess Beatus converts ▲ commoners and grants them .

- Princess Beatus does not grant  to ▲ commoners who were already part of the  church faction.

- If a ▲ commoner is converted to the  church faction by another source at the same time Princess Beatus converts it, it still gets .

**Martyr.** If the Martyr dies, he grants special ▼ influence points.

- The Martyr still grants special ▼ influence points even if he dies in a wave after he is played.

- If the Martyr dying brings a player to 15 or more ▼ influence points, the game doesn't end until the Conflict Phase as normal.

**Miracle Worker.** The Miracle Worker gets extra  power if the player who played her has 0 or 1  gold after paying her cost .