EMPIRES OF ARCANA
The Game of Fantasy Conquest
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War has ravaged Arcana and left the great alliances in ruins. The cities have been destroyed by powerful magic: fire and flood, earthquake and vortex. The people of the world scattered to small villages, hoping to avoid the attention of enemy sorcerers. Goblins rampage across Arcana, savagely eliminating the last vestiges of civilization.

But new warlords have come forth, striving to rebuild civilization under their own banners. It is up to you to drive back the goblins, defeat your rivals, and build an empire!

Game Objectives

There are several ways for a warlord to win:

1) Total destruction of the other warlords. Eliminate all rival towns, castles and units.

2) Controlling a majority of the 50 provinces. This requires holding 32 or more in a two player game, 26 or more in games of three or more players. This is checked at the beginning of the Maintenance Phase.

3) Earn five Victory Points (VP) to be declared Emperor. Warlords check to see if they earn Victory Points during the game turn. Victory Points add up from turn to turn, and are never lost. A player wins the moment they earn 5 points. If more than one player earns 5 at the same time, the game continues until one player has more VP.

There are four ways to earn Victory Points:

1. <u>Master of Magic</u> - Control at least 3 Wizard Towers and more than any other warlord. Check in the Maintenance Phase.
2. <u>Trade Baron</u> - Have the highest income over 30 gold and at least 5 more than any rival. Check in the Income Phase.
3. <u>Warlord</u> – Conquer at least six territories through combat in a turn. Exploring or occupying an empty territory does not count towards this. This is earned at the end of each player's action phase. It is possible for multiple players to earn this in a turn.
4. <u>Goblin Slayer</u> - A warlord gains one VP for each Goblin Warren they destroy during their Action Phase.

It is possible that a warlord may earn several or all of these Victory Points in a turn. The game ends as soon as a warlord has 5 reputation points (or 7 for a longer game).

Basic Game Play

During each turn, warlords collect their incomes in gold and mana. The players check for where goblin incursions appear by drawing province cards, and resolve any combats the goblins initiate. The warlords then roll for initiative, with the highest rolling player taking their action phase first. During each warlord's action phase, they cast Sorceries and then move their units. They then resolve any combats they initiated in the order of their choosing. The next highest rolling warlord then begins their action phase.

After all warlords have completed their action phases, they pay maintenance on their remaining armies. A warlord must spend one gold for every three units they have on the board, rounded down. After maintenance is paid, the warlords may spend their remaining gold and magic on new units and structures, and place them on the board in the reverse of their initiative order (the last acting warlord places their units on the board first).

The next turn then begins. This repeats until one warlord achieves victory.

Game Components

Game Board - The board shows the continent of Arcana, divided into 50 provinces. A few provinces with sea coasts have arrows drawn between them, showing where armies can cross the water from one province to another. During the game, a warlord controls a province if they have a game piece of their color in it. Warlords cannot share a province.

Province Cards - Each card has the name of one province on it, and a map of Arcana with the province's location highlighted in red. The cards are used to determine the starting provinces a player can control, and to determine the appearance and movement of goblin hordes during the game.

Gold tokens - These are the currency of Arcana, and come in denominations of 1 and 5. Gold can be use to buy new units, pay maintenance on existing units, and build new structures.

Mana Tokens - these bright counters show the magic power a warlord has collected. Smaller tokens are worth 1 mana, and larger tokens are worth 5. Mana can be spent to cast Sorceries across the map, or a single Combat spell at the beginning of each turn of combat. It can also be used to counter other warlords' spells. Wizard Towers and Gates require mana and gold to be built.

Warlord Unit and Structure Counters - There are six player sets, one for each potential player. Each set of counters has four types of army units and two types of structures. The abilities of the units are:

Infantry - Move 1 province. Combat power 2

Cavalry - Move 2 provinces. Combat power 3

Wizards - Move 1 province. Combat power 4. Cannot be destroyed by magic spells.

Dragons - Move 3 provinces, and can fly over enemy held provinces so long as they don't contain dragons. Combat power 5. Dragons cannot be affected by the Firestorm spell.

The two types of warlord structures are:

Towns - Income 1 gold. Can be built in any province a warlord controls that doesn't have a town or castle already. Infantry and Cavalry units can be built in towns. They have a garrison of two infantry when attacked. Sorceries may be cast up to two provinces away from towns.

Castles - Income 3 gold. A town may be converted into a castle. Infantry, Cavalry and Dragon units can be built in Castles. They have a garrison of 6 infantry when attacked. Sorceries may be cast up to 4 provinces away from Castles.

A province may have one town or one castle, but never both.

Neutral Structure Counters - These white buildings are structures that any warlord can build or capture.

Gates - Income 1 gold. They allow units to teleport up to three provinces away, or to travel to any friendly controlled gate on the board. They also allow units to gate from the province into a battle within 3 spaces as a combat spell while the battle is being resolved.

Wizard Towers - Income 2 mana. Wizards units may be built at Wizard Towers. They have a garrison of 2 Wizards when attacked. Sorceries may be cast up to 6 provinces away from friendly Wizard Towers.

A province may have one Gate and one Tower, as well as one Warlord structure (either town or castle.)

Goblins – Arcana is in danger of being overrun by goblins. They have a combat power of 2 (like infantry), and move where they cards tell them to.

Goblin Warren – Goblins that are allowed to gather in groups of 10 or more will form a warren in the Maintenance Phase. Warrens allow the goblins to attack additional territories each turn, and can reinforce goblins that appear next to them during the Goblin phase. Warrens can be destroyed by players, but they have 3-18 goblins as a garrison, so armies need to go in heavy!

Extra Troop Markers – These white or grey ovals can go under the base of a unit or goblin to signify extra units of that type are stacked in the province. White = 1 extra troop, and Grey = 3 extra troops.

Setting up

Each player should select a color of player pieces. They have now become the leader of a small alliance of towns and armies!

Each player starts the game with 15 gold, 3 magic, 4 towns, 4 cavalry and 12 infantry. The warlords are dealt 6 province cards, showing the possible provinces they start the game controlling. A warlord does not have to use all of these cards, though a player will need to use at least 4 to place all of their towns. All warlords roll a die, and each warlord takes a turn placing their forces from highest to lowest roller. A warlord must reveal a province card, then place their forces in that province. No more than 6 units and a single town may be placed in a single province. No additional units or towns may be placed in the province later in the setup phase. The next warlord then reveals a province. This continues until all warlords have placed all of their starting pieces.

Once all warlords have put their troops on the map, determine where the starting Goblin Warrens are. Draw one province card out of the remaining deck for each warlord in the game (or 3 if there are only one or two players) and put a Warren in the province. Then, place a magic counter on each province that has no warlord or goblin warren token in it. These markers show unexplored provinces which may contain Goblin units. They are removed after a warlord moves units into them, exploring to see how many goblin units are present. They are also removed if goblins appear in them during the Goblin Phase.

All province cards that were drawn during set up should be placed in a discard pile.

Players skip the first income phase.

Turn Sequence

1) Income
2) Goblin Actions
3) Warlord Actions
    A) Sorceries
    B) Movement
    C) Combat Resolution
4) Maintenance
5) Purchases

Income Phase

Each warlord counts up the amount of Gold and Magic they earn, and takes that total from the bank.

Gold Income
1 per Province
1 per Town
1 per Gate
3 per Castle

Mana Income
1 + 1 per three Provinces (rounded down)
2 per Wizard Tower

Example: A player controls 14 provinces, 2 gates, 2 wizard towers, 6 towns and 2 castles. They earn (14+2+6+6) 28 Gold, and (5+4) 9 Mana.

Check to see if a Warlord earns a point of Reputation for being a Trade Baron by having the highest income over 30 Gold, and at least 5 more than any other player.

The Income Phase is skipped on the first turn.

Goblin life is nasty, brutish and short. They don't have much to live for, so they never retreat and never surrender. They move at night, and build vast underground warrens to hide their numbers. Armies can suddenly appear even in well patrolled, civilized areas. Goblin hordes can move from province to province, gathering their forces until they are a sea of green. If enough goblins gather together, they will dig out a new warren and start breeding more goblins.

At the beginning of the Goblin phase, draw cards from the province deck one at a time, one for each Goblin Warren on the board. Always draw at least three cards, even if there are fewer than three Warrens. As each card is drawn, a player should roll a d6 to determine how many goblins have appeared in that province. If the province had an unexplored marker in it, remove the marker.

In addition, two extra goblins appear in that province for every Warren that is in an adjacent province. If a province is drawn that already has a Warren in it, discard that card and draw another in its place, adding two additional goblins to the die roll. This can add up if several provinces with Warrens are drawn in a row

If there are goblin units in an adjacent province that are not engaged in a combat, those goblins immediately move into the newly drawn province.

This can cause massive waves of goblins to form and move across the board. Keeping a patrol unit in a province instead of leaving it empty is a good way to control the movement of goblins - if the goblins are engaged in a combat, they can't leave to join an adjacent group of goblins if a card is pulled there. Large swathes of unoccupied provinces are just inviting a goblin tsunami to form.

Once all of the required cards are drawn, resolve any combats between goblins and warlords. Goblin units have a Power of 2 - they need to roll a 2 or less to destroy an enemy unit. A player not involved in the combat should roll for the goblins. Goblins are the attackers in this phase, but they will never retreat and cannot use magic. Warlords are free to use a combat spell at the start of each combat round, just like normal combat. No warlord can cast magic or counterspell into another warlord's combat.

If the goblins win a combat, they destroy all structures that were in that province, including the neutral ones.

At the end of the goblin phase, shuffle the discard pile back into the Province Card deck if there are more than 15 discarded Provinces. This means that on the first turn, there is no chance of goblins attacking the warlords' starting provinces, but they can start attacking them on turn 2.

Other Goblin Rules

Goblins can create new warrens at the start of the Maintenance Phase. If there are ten or more goblins in a province at the start of the phase, remove all of the goblin units and place a new Warren counter there. The goblins will get to draw an extra card for each Warren over three that exists, so this is generally a bad thing.

The goblins win the game during any maintenance phase if an 11th warren should be placed on the board, or the goblins control 26 or more provinces. Players should feel very embarrassed if they let this happen.

Warlords can attack Goblin Warrens during their action phase. After moving all units, the player rolls 3d6 (3 to 18) to determine how many goblins units are garrisoned in the Warren. Just like structure garrisons, Warren garrisons start fresh with each new player's Action Phase.

A normal combat then takes place, with another player rolling for the goblins. The goblins do not get to cast magic, but the attacker can cast his one combat spell at the beginning of each combat round. The attacker can still retreat at the end of a combat round.

If the attacker destroys all of the goblins in a warren and still has at least one unit left, the warren is destroyed. The warlord who destroyed it gains one Victory Point, and 1 gold for every two goblins that were garrisoned at the warren, rounded up.

Goblin Warrens cannot be affected by spells. They can only be destroyed by moving an army into its province and defeating its garrison.

After a warlord has finished moving their units, or when the goblins finish placing new units, all combats are resolved. The active warlord (or goblin) is considered the attacker, and the warlord (or goblin) who controlled the province is the defender. The active warlord can determine the order combats are resolved in if there are combats in multiple provinces.

At the start of a combat, Towns, Castles and Wizard Towers add their Garrisons to the combat. These units only exist during the combat, and any survivors disappear back into their structure after the battle is over. Goblin Warrens have a random number of goblins as a garrison, determined by roll 3 dice and adding them together. These units are represented by placing a d6 by the structure, showing the number of units from that structure remaining. For instance, if a province is attacked that has a Castle and a Wizards Tower, the defender places a d6 with a 2 showing by the Tower (for the two garrisoned Wizards), and a d6 with a 6 showing on the Castle (for the six garrisoned Infantry). Garrisons start each new combat at full strength, even if they were wiped out in a previous Action Phase.

A combat is fought in rounds. Each round follows the same sequence; the attacker may cast a spell, the defender may cast a spell, and then both armies roll dice to destroy each other's units. The attacker may decide to retreat at the end of each round. The combat lasts until one side is eliminated or the attacker retreats. Goblins do not use magic, but never retreat!

When the players attempt to cast a Combat Spell, they announce the spell and the target and spend their point of mana. Their opponent may then attempt to to counter the spell by spending a point of their mana and rolling a d6; on a 4 or less the spell is countered and is not resolved.

Lightning Bolt –**The warlord launches a massive arc of electricity at one enemy unit. If the player rolls a 3 or less, the unit is destroyed (may not target enemy Wizard units).**

Resurrect – **The warlord tries to bring a destroyed unit back to life. On a 2 or less, the player may bring one unit that was destroyed in the previous round back into the battle.**

Rescue – **1 unit is teleported from the battle, back to a friendly town or castle that is not under attack. This is automatic. If it is countered, the unit stays in the combat.**

Gate – **If a warlord has a province within three spaces with a Gate in it, he can teleport up to 2 units from that province into the battle. This is automatic. If the spell is countered, the units remain in the starting province.**

After the attacker resolves their spell, the defender may also cast a combat spell, with the attacker now having the chance to counter it.

If the attacker's spell kills the last enemy unit, the defender does not get a chance to cast their combat spell.

No warlord outside of the combat may cast spells into the combat, nor try to counter one of the fighting warlords' spells.

After spells are cast, every unit in the combat makes an attack. This is considered simultaneous for both players. A unit must roll equal to or less than its power to destroy an enemy unit:

Infantry – 2 or less
Cavalry – 3 or less
Wizards – 4 or less
Dragons – 5 or less
Goblins – 2 or less

Once both warlords have rolled their attacks and counted their successes, each warlord removes units of their choice equal to the number destroyed by their enemy. Generally, players will remove the less valuable units before the more valuable units, and garrison units before real units. It does not matter which warlord resolves his attacks first in the combat round, since all units can resolve their attacks before being destroyed.

At the end of the combat round, the attacker can decide to retreat or stay for another round. If a new round starts, both warlords cast spells and then resolve attacks as they did in the first round.

This continues until the attacker retreats, or only one warlord's forces remain. If the defender's units and garrisons are wiped out, and the attacker still has a unit left, he captures the province. Enemy towns and castles are sacked and removed from the board, earning the attacker 1 gold for towns and 3 gold for castles (paid from the bank). Neutral (white) structures remain and are considered captured by the attacker. Neutral structures cannot be destroyed except by goblin conquest or the Earthquake spell.

If the defender and attacker are both wiped out on the same combat round, the defender keeps control of the province if they have a Castle or Town there. If there are no warlord structures involved, the province becomes uncontrolled. Neutral structures remain in the province, but they are not controlled by any player. The next warlord who moves into the province gains control of those structures immediately.

When the opponent is a goblin army, another player should roll the goblins' attacks. Whenever a player eliminates the goblins from a province through combat, they earn 1 gold.

Warlord Actions

Each player rolls two initiative dice. Warlords take their action phase from the highest to lowest roller.

A warlord's actions are performed in 3 steps: Casting Sorceries, Moving Units, and Resolving Combat.

Casting Sorceries

A warlord may spend mana to cast Sorcery spells before he begins moving units. A given spell may be cast at a particular province only once in a warlord's turn, but Sorceries allow a warlord to spend more than one mana at one time to make the spell more powerful. For instance, a Firestorm could be cast using 6 mana, allowing the player to roll six attack dice at once.

If a warlord casts a spell at a province, they cannot cast the same spell at that province again that turn, though they could cast a different spell at the province, or cast the same spell at a different province.

Sorceries must be cast at a target within magical range. A warlord can only cast a spell at a province within 2 provinces from a friendly town, 4 from a friendly castle, or 6 from a friendly controlled wizard's tower. If a warlord has none of these structures, they cannot cast Sorcery spells at all!

Firestorm **– You call a rain of fire down on an enemy army! For each mana you spend on the spell, you get a single Power 3 attack on the province. Each successful attack kills 1 enemy unit, selected by the warlord who's province was attacked (Garrisons, Wizards and Dragons cannot be affected by this spell).**

Earthquake **– Massive tremors try to crumble enemy structures. Each mana spent on the spell gives you a single Power 1 attack on the province. Each success destroys one enemy structure, chosen by that enemy. A destroyed castle becomes a town.**

Siphon Gold **– You steal gold from an opponent's treasury. The opponent must have a town or castle within range. Each mana spent gives you one Power 3 attack on the opponent; each success takes one gold from that warlord and gives it to the caster.**

Alchemy **– Attempts to turn mana into gold. Roll a d6 for each mana spent – on a 4 or less it generates 1 gold for the caster.**

Relocate **- This costs 3 mana. The player may move a structure from one province they control to any other province they control. This can be counterspelled, but it costs 3 mana for each die used in the attempt.**

Any warlord may use their mana to counter another warlord's Sorcery, before its effects are resolved. For each mana spent trying to counter a spell, a player rolls 1 die. Each roll of 4 or less removes one die roll from the spell being cast, or prevents one structure's relocation.

All mana to be spent countering a particular sorcery must be spent all at once, and resolved all at once. A countering player cannot spend one point of mana, resolve the counterspell, and then spend a second point of mana based on whether the first counter worked or not.

Example: Player A casts a Firestorm with 4 mana at Player B's Province. Player B decides to counter with 5 mana, and rolls a 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. 3 of the counters were effective, destroying 3 of the mana Player A used in the spell. Player A may now resolve the firestorm, but with only 1 mana left in it.

A warlord who is targeted by a Sorcery may also retaliate with a Sorcery of their own, once the first warlord resolves their spell. This retaliation can only go against the warlord who just attacked, and follows all of the normal Sorcery rules above.

Example: Player B from above now decides to retaliate. He spends 3 mana to Siphon Gold from Player A. Any player may attempt to counter this spell, and its effects are otherwise resolved normally.

Note that under some circumstances it may be possible to avoid a retaliation by Earthquaking the only enemy structures that had range back to the original caster. Sometimes, a player may also have range to an enemy that does not have their own structures within range to retaliate.

Moving Units

After a warlord is done casting sorceries, they may move units. Units move from province to province. If a unit enters an enemy controlled or unexplored province, it must stop moving, unless they are dragons. Some units may move through several territories per turn:

Infantry – 1 Province
Wizards – 1 Province
Cavalry – 2 Provinces
Dragon Riders – 3 Provinces

A dragon unit may fly through any provinces that do not contain enemy dragons, including unexplored ones.

A unit may give up all of its movement to be transported through a gate. A gate can teleport any number of units up to 3 provinces away. A gate can also transport units to any other friendly gate, no matter the distance between them.

A unit can also be teleported up to three provinces away for a point of magic. This uses all of its movement. It cannot be counterspelled.

Exploring Provinces

After moving, the warlord checks each unexplored province his troops have entered to see whether there are goblins hiding in the wilds. The player rolls a d6 and subtracts 2 from the roll, and places that many goblins in the province. If the result is zero or less, then there are no goblins present.

If the player attacks a warren, they should roll 3d6 to determine how many goblins are defending it. All of these rolls should be determined before moving on to combat Resolution.

Combat Resolution

All provinces that have friendly and enemy troops in them after movement must fight unit only one side remains. The active player may determine which battles to fight first, giving them some freedom to see how high priority battles are go and how to spend magic for them.

If a player conquers 6 provinces through combat in a turn, they earn a victory point!

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Maintenance

After all warlords have taken their action phase, each warlord must pay maintenance for their remaining units. This costs 1 gold per 3 units the warlord has, rounded down (so a player with only 2 units pays nothing in maintenance). If a warlord cannot afford the maintenance, he must eliminate those units they cannot pay for. A warlord may also voluntarily eliminate units to avoid paying maintenance for them.

If any provinces have ten or more goblins units, they remove those units and place a goblin warren in the territory. If the goblins have 13 or more Warrens on the board, or control 26 or more provinces, they win the game.

Players should check to see if anyone earns a Victory Point for being the Master of Magic, by controlling at least 3 Wizard Towers and having more Wizard Towers than any other player

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Purchases

Warlords now make purchases with their remaining money, and place them on the map in reverse initiative order from the Warlord Actions phase. Warlords may only place new units in provinces with the appropriate structures. *No province may have more than 4 new units placed into it*.

Infantry – 1 Gold – May be placed with Towns and Castles
Cavalry – 2 Gold – May be placed with Towns and Castles
Wizards – 2 Gold – May be placed with Wizard Towers
Dragons – 3 Gold – May be placed with Castles

Warlords may also buy new structures in territories they control.

Towns – 4 Gold – May be placed in provinces with friendly units
Castles – 10 Gold – Must replace a town
Wizard Towers – 5 Gold and 5 Mana – May be placed in provinces with towns or castles
Gates – 3 Gold and 3 Mana – May be placed in provinces with castles or wizard towers

When a structure is built, it cannot be used to build other units or structures that depend on it. So a province with a Town cannot build a Wizard Tower then a Gate on the same turn, nor can a province without structures build a Town and then a Castle in the same turn. A warlord could not build a Castle then place Dragons with it on the same turn, though they could build Infantry or Cavalry.

Optional Rules

Passive Goblins

The goblins are a powerful force on Arcana, and can easily win the game if players do not cooperate early. However, if players don't want to cooperate and just want to fight each other, the goblins can be reduced to a passive limitation to expansion.

To do this, remove the Goblin Phase from the game. Goblins may still be found in unexplored provinces, but they do not move around and do not build warrens. The Province Cards are not used after set-up is completed.

Player Selected Setup

Instead of using the cards to randomly determine which starting provinces are allied under their banner, the players take turns picking territories. Players should roll two dice, and the players proceed from highest to lowest placing one town in the province of their choice, then repeating the order three more times until all four towns are placed. The Players then follow the same order, placing all of their units down in their four starting provinces at once, with no more than six units placed in any one province.

This limits warlords to only four provinces and four towns starting out, instead of six. Also, because players do not pick cards with this set up option, goblins can attack warlords on the first turn!

Solo Games

Empires of Arcana is an easy game to play solo, one player against the goblins. All of the normal rules and setup are followed: The player begins the game with 15 gold, 3 magic, 4 towns, 4 cavalry, and 12 infantry, and draws six cards to determine stating location. The goblins receive 3 cards to determine their initial warren locations, and always roll at least 3 dice for number of goblin spawns.

The game goes on until the player wipes out all goblin warrens, or the goblins win.

The difficulty for this scenario can be increased by upping the number of initial warrens to 4 or even 5.

Defender Retreats

The attacking warlord can allow the defender to retreat at the start of any turn, before casting combat magic. Defenders can retreat to any adjacent province that they already control. Goblins still never retreat, nor do they allow warlords to retreat when they have attacked them.

Trades

Warlords can freely transfer money and mana with other warlords during their Warlord Action phase. For instance, a player could offer to buy mana from a warlord, or pay them to attack another warlord. A player could blackmail another warlord by threatening to attack unless paid. An attacker could even offer to retreat at the start of a combat turn if the other warlord plays him.

Cooperative Play

The players may never attack each other, including by spells. They may only attack goblins. However, the goblins are more aggressive, and begin the game with warrens equal to the number of player plus one (minimum of three). The goblins draw a minimum number of cards equal to the number of players, or three cards if they are only one or two players.

Victory points are collected only for defeating warrens.

The game ends when all goblin warrens are removed from the map.