



PARA BELLUM

RULEBOOK

## INTRODUCTION

In 49 BC, Caesar crossed the Rubicon at the head of a legion of soldiers marching towards Rome. Though his army was small, few defenses on the Italian peninsula were prepared to stop him. Fresh legions training in the south would not be ready to intercept Caesar's rebels in time.

As Caesar's legion approached, the senate fled Rome to the East. Their last hope was general Pompeius, the only man who could match Caesar's achievements on the battlefield. Pompeius set up in Greece, and mustered a large army to stop Caesar's invasion.

Today, the forces of Caesar and Pompey will meet on the battlefield. You command one of their clashing armies. It will be a bloody fight—Roman against Roman. You must draw up your legions in battle formation, find ways to raise the morale of your legionaries, and win the battle before it even starts by out-thinking and outmaneuvering your opponent.

Para Bellum is a tableau-building card and dice game for 2-4 players, set during Julius Caesar's Civil War in the Late Roman Republic. The players are military leaders loyal to either the senate and Pompeius, or to Caesar's rebellion. Use your wits and resources to make sure that your troops are in high spirits and that the enemy is demoralized when the game ends... and the battle begins!

## COMPONENTS



### 30 VICTORY POINT TOKENS

10 Each: 1 Point,  
3 Point, 5 Point



### 1 FIRST PLAYER TOKEN



### 20 COIN TOKENS



### 20 COLOR BLAZONS



### 24 BANNER TOKENS

4 Each: Strategist, Field Commander,  
Warlord, Artifex, Veterani, Speculatore



## 55 ARMY CARDS

5 Starting Cards, 25 for 2+ Players,  
15 for 3+ Players, 15 for 4 Players



## 12 OBJECTIVE CARDS



## 47 COMMAND CARDS

10 Orders, 10 Permanents, 2 Special Units



## 4 REFERENCE CARDS



## 3 BATTLE CARDS



## 12 EVENT CARDS



## 64 DICE

4 General, 20 Centurion,  
40 Legion



## 16 ACTION TOKENS



## 4 RUNNER TOKENS For 4-Player Games



## 3 ALLIANCE CARDS For 4-Player Games

# SETUP












- I. Each player selects a starting color and places the corresponding starting Army card in front of themselves, face up.
- II. Separately shuffle the Army, Command, Event, Battle, and Objective card decks and place them in the middle of the table. Leave a spot for the Command and Event discard piles.

In 4-player game, add the Army cards with a III + IV on their lower right corner, to the Army card deck. In a 3-player Game add only the ones with a III.

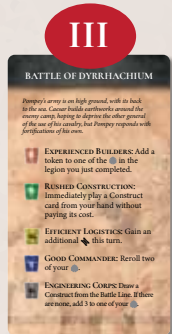
- III. Choose a Battle card at random. Place it on the table and return the remaining Battle cards to the box.
- IV. Each player draws 3 Objective cards and selects two to keep. Return any cards that weren't selected to the bottom of the Objective deck.

In a 4-player Game teams have a Shared Objective as well as individual teammate's personal Objectives.

Each player draws 2 Objective cards and selects one to keep. Then each team draws one additional Objective card; this is their Shared Objective.

- V. Reveal 4 Command cards () from the top of the deck and place them in the middle of the play area. These four cards are the **Battle Line**.
- VI. Each player rolls their . The player with the highest roll gets the First Player token.
- VII. Starting with the opponent on the left next to the First Player, each player takes a  from the Battle Line. Repeat this process twice, so that each player has two  cards. Then replenish it by adding 4 new face-up cards to the Battle Line from the  deck.
- VIII. Each player draws two Army Cards ().
- IX. Each player takes the following:
  - 2 Coins ()
  - 5 Color Blazons, one of each color
  - 1 of each Banner Token ()
  - A blue General die ()
  - Three Action tokens ()
  - A set of reference cards
- X. Set your  to 6 and place it in the blue slot on your starting Army card.

You are now ready to play, starting with the player with the First Player token.



In a 4-player game, players play in teams. Teammates should sit next to one another. You may freely coordinate with your teammate and show them any cards you have, but you may not give or trade anything with them unless an effect specifically instructs you to do so.

Each team takes an Alliance card at random and places it between them. Each teammate takes a Runner token and places it on the nearest slot on their side of this card. For more information on Alliances, see page XIII.

# CORE CONCEPTS

## YOUR ARMY

As a general, your top priority is to organize your troops for battle. You begin the game with a Starting Army card, and will connect a new Army card (👤) to it each turn. All together these connected cards make up your Army.



## VICTORY POINTS

As you amass your army, you'll gain Victory Points (✨). ✨ can be earned in a variety of ways. The goal of Para Bellum is to have the most ✨ when the game ends.



## ACTIONS AND COSTS

🔪🔥👤: Gain 🗡️.

Players manage their armies via actions written on the cards they play. Most actions will instruct you to spend resources in order to use them.

Anything written before the colon (:) in an action's text is its cost, and anything written after the colon is its effect. If you can't pay the cost of an action, you can't use it.

## DICE

In Para Bellum, dice represent the morale of your army. There are three different dice you can collect. The blue General die (🔵) is the personal power and influence of your general. Red Centurion dice (🔴) are the respect and ability of your commanders. Gray Legion dice (🔷) are the morale of your soldiers.

**Dice are resources.** Many actions will ask you to spend a number value from your dice to pay for their effects.

**Dice are also victory points.** The total value of your 🔷 is added to your ✨ at the end of the game. Most of your ✨ will come from 🔷, so try to keep them as high as possible!

## COMMAND CARDS & THE BATTLE LINE

Command Cards (🗡️) represent specific orders, people, and devices that you can deploy to give you an advantage in battle. They can be played from your hand to perform the effect written on them (see Command Cards on page XVI).






**Command Cards aren't drawn directly from their deck.** Instead, a Field of four face-up Command cards is always available in the middle of the table. When you're instructed to take a 🗡️, take one of these face-up cards and put it into your hand. Then replenish the Battle Line with a new card

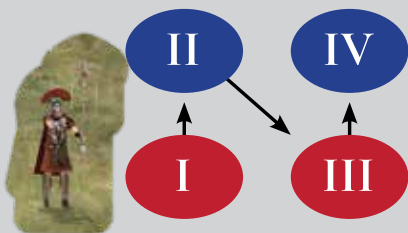
from the Command deck.

## TURNS

Para Bellum is played in turns, starting with the First Player and proceeding clockwise. The First Player reveals an Event card at the start of their turn. After that, turns are separated into 3 phases:

- I. Army Phase: Play an  from your hand.
- II. Action Phase: Spend Actions ().
- III. Draw Phase: Draw a new  and check your maximum hand size.

In a 4-player game, instead of proceeding clockwise, teams alternate turns in the following order:



- I. The starting player
- II. The opposing player sitting closest to the starting player
- III. The starting player's teammate
- IV. The opposing teammate sitting furthest from the starting player

## EVENTS

At the beginning of the First Player's turn, that player reveals the top card of the Event deck. Event cards change the rules of the game for that round. As the First Player begins their next turn, discard that Event card and reveal a new one.

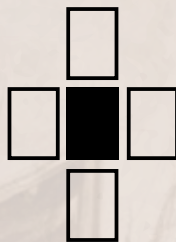


## ARMY PHASE

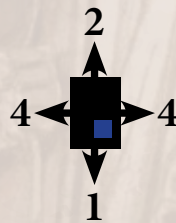
In the Army Phase, play an Army card from your hand. If you complete a Legion or Centurion, you'll add dice to it. If you completed a Big Legion, you will get a Battle Bonus and trigger a Morale test!

For the placement of your new Army card to be legal, all of the following must be true:

**I.** The new card must connect to an existing card in your army: directly above, below, left, or right.




**II.** The new card cannot be more than 2 cards above, 1 card below, or 4 cards to the left or right of your Starting Army card.




**III.** The color of the new card must match the color of any cards you wish to connect it to.





### *Tip: Your First Army*

*We recommend placing your first Army card directly above or below your Starting Army card on your first turn. Doing so completes a Centurion, which gives you a  you can immediately spend on useful actions!*

## COMPLETING A CENTURION

When two Army cards are connected vertically, this completes a Centurion. Roll a Centurion die () and add it to the new slot. Then add a Banner Token to any die in your army (see Banner Tokens on page IX).

## COMPLETING A LEGION

When the illustrations on horizontally connected Army cards form a complete troop, this completes a Legion. For each new slot of a completed, roll a Legion die () and place it in that slot. If you rolled a 1 or 2, also take a , but only once per turn.

The first time you complete a Legion of a color, take a Color Blazon of that color.

Legions of 3 or more connected cards have additional effects! (see Big Legions on page X)

It's possible to complete both Centurions and Legions with the same card. If this happens, add the Legion dice first, then add the Centurion dice.





### COMPLETING A CENTURION

Add a red Centurion Die and a Red Banner or a Grey Banner if you already have a Grey Legion Die.



### COMPLETING A LEGION

Add a gray Legion Die



## BANNER TOKEN

Banner Tokens identify specialist forces in your army, recruited by your Centurions. A banner token attaches to a die and allows it to be spent on more powerful actions; (see Spending Dice on page XI for more details).



Each die slot in your army has a banner slot next to it. Whenever you complete a Centurion, add a Banner Token to any die in your army by placing it in the connected slot. You may choose any die in your army (not just the one you completed!) and may choose any of the three Banner Token that match the color of the die you're adding to.

Banner Tokens are connected to the die they were added to. If that die moves, the banner token moves with it. If that die is lost, the banner token is lost as well.

## LOSING DICE

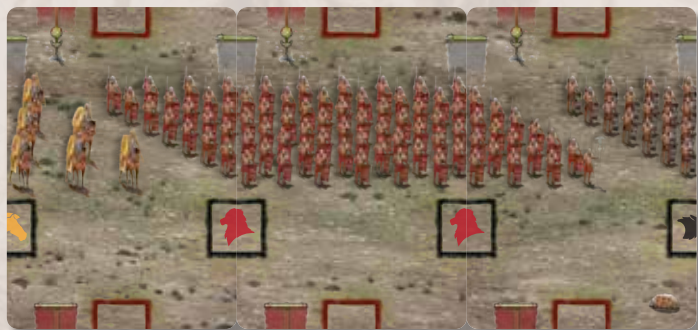
If a die is reduced to 0, it is lost. Remove it from your Army and return it to the supply. Some other effects (like failed Morale tests) can also cause you to lose dice.

Dice that are lost can no longer be affected by most actions. An action that increases a die by 1 has no effect on an empty slot, for instance. The slots left by Lost Dice can be refilled by certain effects, though!

Your  cannot be reduced below 1, and can never be lost. If your  is already at 1, you can't spend it.

# BIG LEGIONS

Big Legions are 3 or more connected Army cards. When you complete a Big Legion, after performing all the usual actions you take upon completing a Legion, you get two additional effects: you get a Battle Bonus, and your opponents must take a Morale Test.



BIG LEGION

## BATTLE BONUS

Each Battle Card has five Battle Bonuses, one for each color. When you complete a Big Legion, perform the Battle Bonus that matches that color.




If you completed a Big Legion that matches the color of your Starting Army card (including one that includes that card), you may instead choose any of the Battle Bonuses!



**RUSHED CONSTRUCTION:**  
Immediately play a Construct card from your hand without paying its cost.

## MORALE TEST

The sight of massed troops coming over the horizon is enough to intimidate even veteran soldiers. A Morale test is triggered for each opponent whenever a Big Legion is completed, and can also be triggered by specific cards.

When you take a Morale test, roll a die and add 1 to the result for each full-color Army card in the legion that caused the test. If the result is less than or equal to the number of  and  in your army, you passed the test. If you failed the test, you must remove one of your .





FULL-COLOR  
ARMY CARD




## Tip: Big Legions, or More Colors?


*Completing a Big Legion gives you several attractive bonuses, but they take longer to build, so you won't be able to get Color Blazons as quickly. If you want to try to end the game with Color Blazons, try making smaller Legions instead!*



## ACTION PHASE



In the Action Phase, spend Actions () to gain resources, bolster your army, and many other things. You have a variety of Basic Actions at your disposal at the start of the game, and you can gain more ways to use  by playing Permanent cards.





At the beginning of this phase, gain a number of  based on the number of players. Two- and three-player games have 3  per turn; four-player games have only 2  per turn.

Each  may be spent on a different Basic Action. Players start with a variety of Actions, and can gain more via Permanent cards.

You may use any Basic Action multiple times per turn but Actions on Permanent Cards only once per turn.

## SPENDING DICE


Many Actions will ask you to spend dice to pay for their effects. To spend a die, reduce a die that matches the color of the icon by the number of dots inside that icon. For instance,  means to reduce a  by 1.

Some costs require a die with a specific Banner; if so, that banner's icon will be listed before the die. For example,   means to reduce a  with a  Banner by 1.


## BASIC ACTIONS

The following Basic Actions are available to you every turn, and are written on your reference card:


### COMMAND:

: Play an Order card from your hand.  
(see page XIV)




### DEPLOY:

: Play a Permanent or Special Unit card from your hand. (see pages XIV - XV)




### MUSTER:

 : Draw an .





### EMPOWER:

 : Add 2 to any  in your Army.




### CONSULT:

 : Draw a .

### MOTIVATE:

 : Reroll one or both of the Legion dice above the  you spent.  can't be spent to perform this action.

### REQUISITION:

: Put an  on the bottom of the deck. If you do so, gain a .

## COINS



The Requisition action and some Command cards will allow players to gain Coins (☉). ☉ may be spent in place of ⬛ or ⬜: if you would reduce the value of a die by 1 to pay a cost, you may discard a ☉ instead.

If a cost requires a Banner, you still need that Banner in your army to use it, even if you're using a ☉ to pay for it.

## OBJECTIVES

Objectives are strategic opportunities that can turn the tide of battle in your favor. Players start with two Objectives. Each card will instruct you to keep it face up or face down.

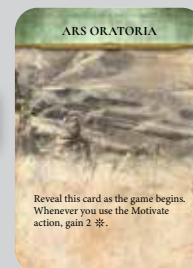
Each Objective card has a condition written on it. If you fulfill that condition, turn the card face-up (if it wasn't already) and gain ✨ counters equal to the number at the bottom of the card. Keep those counters on it to show that you've fulfilled that Objective.



In a 4-player game, each team also has a Shared Objective that they can both fulfill and get ✨ counters individually.





GAIN ✨



# ALLIANCE CARDS

In a 4-player game, each team has an Alliance card with additional unique Actions on it: an Alliance Action and a Runner Action.

The Alliance Action on the bottom of the card may be used by either player on the team, as if it were a Basic Action.


The Runner Action moves your Runner. Each teammate has a Runner that starts on the closest slot to them on the Alliance card. You may spend a  to move your Runner token to the next space, following the arrow on the card. You may move the Runner multiple times in the same turn by spending multiple .

When the Runner reaches the top space, the bonus effect on that side is triggered; follow its instructions, then return the Runner to the space closest to you (where it started the game).



**YOUR RUNNER STARTS  
NEXT TO YOU...**





**...MOVES TOWARDS  
YOUR TEAMMATE WITH  
EACH  SPENT...**



**...AND TRIGGERS A  
POWERFUL EFFECT  
ONCE THEY REACH  
THE OTHER SIDE!**





## DRAW PHASE

At the end of the turn, draw a .

If you have any unspent , lose them.


## COMPONENT MAXIMUMS

You may have up to:

- 5  and 10  in your army.
- 1 of each type of Banner in your army.
- 7 total  and  in your hand.


If you have more than 7 cards in your hand at the end of your turn, discard until you're at the maximum again.

## COMMAND CARDS

Command cards () represent all the tactical tools at your disposal as a General: cunning plans, skilled lieutenants, and sturdy fortifications. They come in three types: Orders, Permanents, and Special Units.



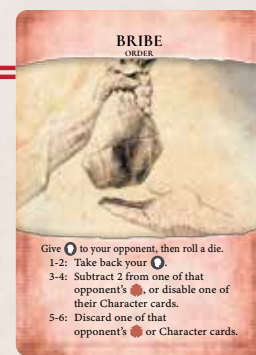
## THE BATTLE LINE

**Command Cards aren't drawn directly from their deck.** Instead, a Battle Line of four face-up Command cards is always available in the middle of the table. When you're instructed to take a , take one of these face-up cards and put it into your hand. Then add a card from the Command deck to the Battle Line face-up to replace the card you took.

## ORDERS

Order cards are versatile one-time effects. Some Order cards have two options. To use an Order card, choose an option and follow the instructions.

Some Order cards have costs in their options. You must pay the cost of an option in order to use it.



## PERMANENTS





Permanent cards are persistent effects. When played, Permanents remain face up in front of you, below your Army. While in play, they either give you an additional action you can perform, or change the rules for you in a specific way (or both!).



## SPECIAL UNITS

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Special Unit cards are pieces of siege equipment or other machines of war that can bolster your army. They work just like Permanent cards in that they give an action or change a rule.

However, when played, they're added to your Army like  instead of below it. Follow the same rules for placement as  with some key differences. Special Units have no color; therefore, they can't have regular Army cards immediately to their left or right, or above them but a Special Unit can be to the left or right of another Special Unit. Also no  is placed on the slot created when connected to an .

## PERMANENT SUBTYPES

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Most Permanent cards have one or more subtypes, like Character or Construct. These subtypes don't mean anything on their own, but other cards can reference them. For instance, the Assassin's action can only eliminate permanents with the Character subtype (assassins are good at killing people, but not buildings!).

## DISABLING PERMANENTS

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Some cards will Disable a Permanent. To Disable a card, turn it face-down. While it's face-down, it does nothing. Turn all of your Disabled cards face-up again at the end of your turn.



## ENDING THE GAME

The end of the game is triggered in one of two ways:



- I. A player draws the last Army card.
- II. A player has completed legions in all 5 colors. If you triggered the end of the game in this way, gain 5 ✨ counters (no ✨ counters are gained if the end was already triggered).

The player who triggers the end of the game takes the Starting Player token, then flips it to its Ending Player side. When the turn would next pass to the Ending Player, the game ends.

### *Tip: Endgame Strategy*

*If you want the game to end more quickly to secure a win, use the Muster action to deplete the 🗡️ deck. On the other hand, if you're behind and need the game to last a few more turns, use the Requisition action to put cards back in the 🗡️ deck.*

## SCORING:

- I. Look at all your 🗡️ connected to each other by a Cornicine (trumpeter). For each connected pair, you may change the value of one of these dice to the value of the other. (Usually, you will want to change to the higher value!) 
- II. Add up the values of all your 🗡️.
- III. Add the values of any 🗡️ with Mounted Commanders that are connected to completed Legions. 
- IV. Add the values of any Objectives you completed. If you have any face-down Objectives that you can complete at the end of the game, turn them face-up now.
- V. Add the value of your ✨ counters.

Once scoring is complete, the player or team with the most points wins. In the event of a tie, the player with the highest point total from 🗡️ wins the game.

If you're playing on a team, add your score together with your teammate to determine your team's final score.






## COLLECTED FOUR-PLAYER RULES

Below are all the modifications to the rules in a 4-player game, collected here in one place for your convenience.

- In a 4-player game, players play in teams. You can share all of your hidden information with your teammate.
- During setup, each player draws 2 personal Objective cards and keeps 1. Then each team draws one Shared Objective. Both players can fulfill the Shared Objective and get ✨ counters individually.
- During setup, teams choose an Alliance card at random. Both players on that team may use the Alliance action written on their card, and may use the Runner action to move their Runners. See page XIII for more details.
- Turn order alternates between players on opposite teams in the following order: starting player, closest opponent, teammate, furthest opponent.
- Teams combine their teammates' scores when checking to see who wins at the end of the game.

# GLOSSARY


**Action** : Something you can do on your turn. Each Action can be performed once per turn, and most Actions require you to spend one of your three .

**Action Phase:** The second phase in a turn, in which you spend  to use Actions.


**Add:** To place a die or banner in a slot on your Army.

**Alliance:** A card type used in 4-player games. Your Alliance card gives you and your teammate a selection of actions unique to your team.

**Army:** The Army cards in front of you.

**Army Card** : A card representing the legions of soldiers that you're mustering before the battle. You add one Army card to your Army each turn.



**Army Phase:** The first phase in a turn, in which you play an Army card from your hand.

**Artifex** : A type of Banner, representing a corps of engineers.


**Banner:** When you complete a Centurion, add a Banner to your army. Banners allow you to pay for more powerful Commands.


**Battle Bonus:** An additional advantage gained from a special kind of soldier. Completing a Big Legion gives you the Battle Bonus of that color.

**Battle Card:** The specific battle that you and your opponents are about to fight. Each Battle card has unique Battle Bonuses.





**Battle Line:** Four face-up Command cards. Whenever you're instructed to take a , take it from the Field, then replace it with the top card of the  deck.

**Big Legion:** A Legion with one or more full-color Army cards in it, representing an intimidating number of troops. Making one of these gets you a Battle Bonus and Color Blazon, and forces a Morale Test for your opponents.


**Centurion:** One of your field commanders. Completing a Centurion adds  and a Banner to your army.


**Centurion Die** : A red die, added to your army when you complete a Centurion. Centurion Dice can be spent to pay costs.


**Character:** A type of Permanent, representing specialists in your forces.

**Coin** : Your cash on hand, used to pay your troops. When you pay for an action, a  may be spent instead of reducing a  or  by 1.



**Color:** There are five legion colors. New Army cards you play must match the color of the cards to their left and right. If you complete a Big Legion, you get a Color Blazon of that color, and can use the Battle Bonus of that color.

**Color Blazon:** A reward for completing a Big Legion. If you are the first to have all five Color Blazons, gain 5  and the game ends at the end of the round.

**Command Card** : Your tactical tools separate from your Army. Orders, Permanents, and Special Units are all types of Command cards.

**Complete:** To place an Army card such that it completes a red  slot (vertical), or an entire contiguous illustration of a legion of soldiers (horizontal).

**Construct:** A type of Permanent, representing fortifications and siege weapons.

**Cornicine:** A trumpeter who inspires your troops. If a Cornicine is connecting two  at the end of the game, you may set one of those  to the other's value.

**Cost:** The resources you need to spend to perform an action. Icons and instructions before a colon in a card's effect are its cost.

**Disable:** To prevent a Permanent from being used by turning it face down. Disabled permanents are turned face up again at the start of their owner's turn.

**Draw:** To take a card and place it in your hand.

**Draw Phase:** The third and final phase in a turn, in which you draw an Army card.

**Event:** An unpredictable occurrence that can change the results of the battle. Before each of the First Player's turns, an Event card is drawn, which changes the rules for that round.

**Field Commander** 🏹: A type of Banner, representing a respected veteran centurion.

**First Player Token:** A token used to mark who took the first turn, and later who initiated the end of the game.

**General Die** 🎲: Your personal power and respect among your troops. General dice can be spent to pay costs, and can never be removed.

**Hand:** Your private collection of 📄 and 🏹. You may have a total of 7 cards in your hand at once; if you have more, discard until you have only 7.

**Legion:** A complete formation of like-colored troops. Completing a Legion adds 🎲 to your army.

**Legion Die** 🎲: A gray die, added to your army when you complete a Legion. Legion Dice can be spent to pay costs, and are worth ✨ at the end of the game.

**Morale Test:** Soldiers quake in fear at the sight of a superior army. When a Big Legion is created, each other player must pass a Morale Test; if they don't, they lose a 🎲!

**Mounted Commander:** A centurion on a horse, who provides a tactical advantage. If a Mounted Commander is connecting a 🎲 to a 🏹 at the end of the game, that 🏹 is worth ✨ equal to its value.

**Objective:** An additional opportunity for gaining victory points. Achieving the condition on this card grants you additional ✨.

**Order:** A type of Command card. Orders are discarded once their effects are resolved.

**Permanent:** A type of Command card. Permanents stay in play after you play them, and provide additional actions or change the rules.

**Round:** One of each player's turns, starting with the first player and ending when their next turn begins.

**Runner:** A messenger sent to your teammate's camp. In a 4-player game, you may spend a 🏹 to move your Runner one space. When they reach the end of the track, a powerful ability is triggered, and the Runner is reset.

**Special Unit:** A type of Command card. Special Units are added to your army and give you powerful actions.

**Speculator** 🏹: A type of Banner, representing scouts and sappers.

**Spend:** To give something in exchange for something else. To spend a die, decrease its value by the spent amount; to spend anything else, discard it.

**Strategist** 🏹: A type of Banner, representing a centurion with particular tactical genius.

**Team:** 4-player games are played in teams of two. You share information with your teammate, add your scores together at the end of the game, and have a shared Objective and Alliance card.

**Turn:** All of one player's game actions. Turns have three phases: Army, Action, and Draw.

**Veterani** 🏹: A type of Banner, representing a squad of veteran infantry.

**Victory Points** ✨: The morale and readiness of your army. Have the most ✨ at the end of the game to win!

**Warlord** 🏹: A type of Banner, representing a particularly ruthless centurion.

