

# EMPIRE'S END



RULEBOOK

# Introduction

*"Look back over the past, with its changing empires that rose and fell, and you can foresee the future, too."*

-Marcus Aurelius

Empire's End is a game about salvaging glory in the face of disaster. Your empire, having ruled for centuries, is now in decline. Famine strikes at your people, plague lurks in your great cities, and barbarians are hammering at your gates. How will you lead your empire through this most precarious of times? Save what you can but remember: a smart ruler knows not just how to win, but how to lose. Most importantly, they also know how turn disaster into opportunity.

## Objective

The game is played in a series of phases. After each phase is resolved, the progress track is advanced one space and the next phase begins. When the "End" space is reached the game ends, players count their final score, and the player with the most victory points is the winner.

A player's final score is made up of victory points gained during the game through Conflict phases and scoring abilities as well as points gained at game end from their healthy locations and end phase scoring abilities.

Successful players will balance the loss of their locations with the acquisition of powerful innovations. Lose too many locations to disaster and you won't have the points to win; be too protective of your empire and you won't have the flexibility to navigate the later phases of the game!

## Components



1 Game Board



44 Location Tiles (4 sets of 11)



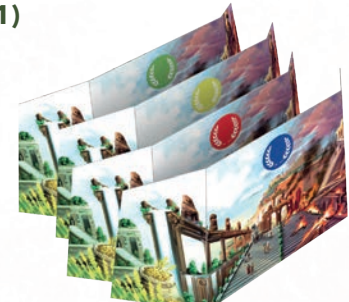
11 Conflict Cards



66 Disaster Cards



12 Exhaust Markers



4 Player Screens



4 Score Markers



10 Game Markers


(8 Disaster, 1 First Player, and 1 Turn Marker)



120 Resource Tokens

(30 Wheat, 25 Axe, 25 Hammer, and 20 Coin)

# SETUP

- Place the Turn Board in the middle of the play area. If you're playing with 2 players, use the side of the board with the 2-player marker. If you're playing with 3-4 players, use the side of the board with the 3-4 player marker. 
- Place the turn marker (the hourglass token) on the square that reads "Start".
- Separate the resource tokens and Exhaust markers into separate piles within easy reach of every player. Split each token type into two piles if needed.
- Shuffle all the Disaster cards into a deck and place the deck face down on the table.
- Shuffle all the Conflict cards into a deck and place the deck face down on the table.
- Give the first player marker (the temple token) to the player who most recently lit a fire.
- Give each player the following...
  - A privacy screen.
  - 2 orange Disaster Markers (the fire tokens).
  - 2 resources of each type (2 coins, 2 wheat, 2 hammers, and 2 axes). Place these tokens behind the screens so players can't see each other's resources.
  - 4 random cards from the top of the disaster deck. Each player may look at their own cards.
  - A set of 11 location tiles.
- Stack a point tracker matching the color of each player's privacy screen on the outer edge of the board, on the 0-point square.
- Have the First Player shuffle their location tiles and place them, healthy side up, in a random order in their play space. Every other player arranges their location tiles in their own play space in the same order as the First Player.

**For Example:** The start player placed their locations in this random order. Each other player arranges their own locations in a matching order.



*"Difficulties strengthen the mind as labor does the body."*  
- Seneca the Younger

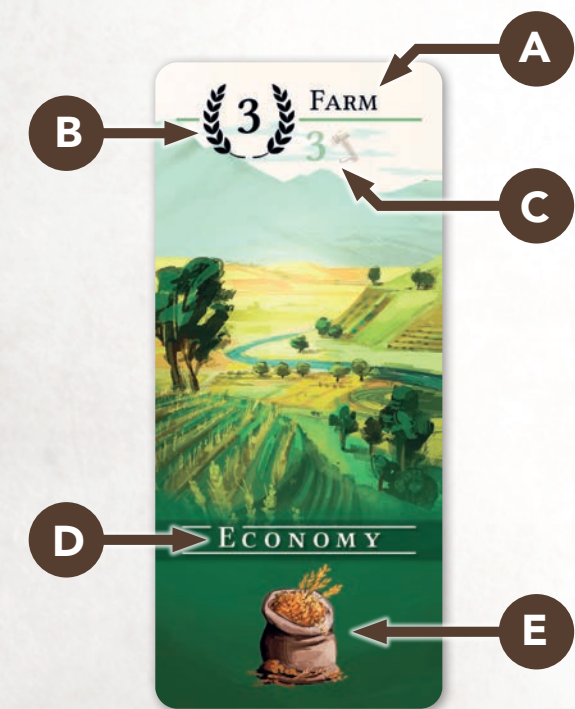
# GAMEPLAY

## Your Empire

Each player has an empire made up of the same 11 Location cards: One City, Two Towns, Two Armies, Three Roads, and Three Farms. Each location in an empire has a different point value that only scores if that location is healthy at game end.

Each location card has similar features. On its healthy side you will find information on:

- A. Type of Location.
- B. Victory point value if healthy at the end of the game.
- C. Repair cost if destroyed.
- D. Ability's phase of play.
- E. Ability.



A Destroyed location:

- F. Is worth no points at the end of the game.
- G. Costs a specific amount to repair.
- H. Does not have an ability.
- I. Does not activate any innovations underneath it.



## Resources

During the game each empire will spend resources to stave off disaster, repair damaged locations, fight conflicts, and purchase innovations. These resources are represented by tokens.

There are four token types: wheat, hammers, axes, and coins. The first three token types represent the economic, industrial, and military resources of your empire, while coins are a wild resource that can be used in place of any other resource during the game. All players begin the game with two of each resource, including coins.



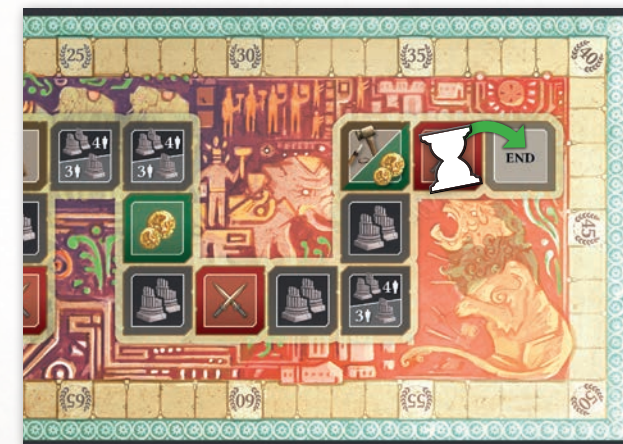
## Game Rounds

The game is played in a series of phases indicated on the game board. At the beginning of the game, players advance the hourglass token from the START space to the first space.



All players then complete the phase that the progress token is now on (for the first phase, this will always be a Disaster Phase).

When all players have completed the current phase, advance the token again and all players then complete the new phase (in this example, an Economy Phase). This process continues until the hourglass token reaches the END space, at which point the game is over and players count their final points.



The different types of phases in Empire's End are:



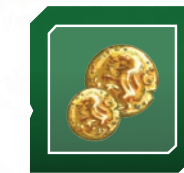
### DISASTER

During a Disaster phase, a Disaster card is revealed, threatening a specific location. Players bid resources to avoid taking the disaster card, until a player finally takes the card and the accumulated resources. Disaster phases are discussed in detail on page 5.



### DOUBLE DISASTER

In 3-4 player games there are double disaster phases where two disasters are played at once and both must be individually bid away or taken. Double Disaster phases are discussed in detail on page 6.



### ECONOMY

During an Economy phase, all players simultaneously activate all green abilities in their empire, producing and converting economy resources and activating economy innovations. Economy phases are discussed in detail on page 7.



### INDUSTRY

During an Industry phase, players repair damaged locations and build new innovations from their hand, as well as activate brown abilities and industry innovations. Industry phases are discussed in detail on page 8.



### CONFLICT

During a Conflict phase, players reveal a conflict card and simultaneously secretly bid axes and coins to see who wins the conflict, and who loses. Players may gain victory points and resources, remove exhaust markers, and move locations during this phase. Conflict phases are discussed in detail on page 10.



### ECONOMY/INDUSTRY COMBINED PHASE

Players complete an entire Economy phase and an entire Industry phase, in either order. Each phase must be fully completed before moving on to the next. The Economy/Industry combined phase is discussed in detail on page 11.

### SIMULTANEOUS PLAY

During Economy, Conflict, and Industry rounds, players play simultaneously. In early games it can be helpful to have players complete these rounds one at a time, to make sure everyone understands and is playing correctly.

Every player begins with the same arrangement of locations in their empire, but over the course of the game, location tiles will move and be destroyed, leaving each player with a very different situation to manage.



“ Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fail. - Confucius ”

## Disaster Phase

Disaster Phases are the most common phase. They represent the many challenges facing your waning empire. Disaster cards are all laid out as follows:



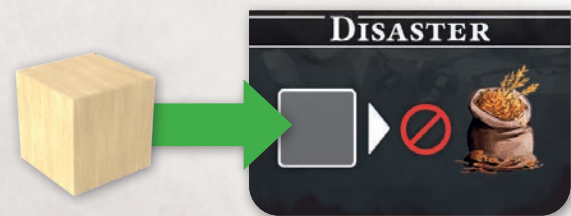
- A.** The name of the disaster. There are 11 of each disaster type.
- B.** A target location number, indicating which location in each player's empire is being targeted. Each player counts location tiles (both healthy and destroyed) from left to right in their empire and places a Disaster marker on the location indicated. Later in the game, as tiles get moved around, this can reference different location tiles for different players.



- C.** The resources that can be bid on this card. These can be Wheat, Hammers, Axes, or some combination of those. Coins are wild and may always be used instead of any other resource type.
- D.** If the card has an extra cost to build it during the Industry phase, it will be noted here with a + and a hammer icon.
- E.** The phase the Innovation ability activates in.
- F.** The Innovation, the ability gained if this card is taken.

### DISASTER PHASE ABILITIES

There are certain Innovation abilities you can only use during a Disaster Phase. These must be "Exhausted" to be used and then cannot be used again until they are "Refreshed."



To use a Disaster Phase ability, take one of the wood Exhaust markers and place it on the cube spot of the ability card. The ability is now Exhausted.

**Note:** abilities do not automatically refresh. Something must cause them to refresh. The primary way to do this is with the abilities on two of your starting roads. When you refresh an ability remove the Exhaust marker from the ability and put it back in the bank.

The most common type of Disaster Phase ability is a "Free Bid" ability, like the one shown above.

These abilities show a icon followed by a resource type. You may use this ability to pass, for one turn, on a Disaster card that requires the indicated resource without having to bid a resource token. A pass only covers one bid. If the bid returns to you again in the same disaster, you will have to bid again.

### To resolve a Disaster Phase:

1. Turn over the top card of the disaster deck and place it on the table in the middle of the play area.
2. Each player then places their disaster marker on the targeted location in their empire. This makes it easy for other players to see which location in your empire is targeted.
3. Beginning with the first player, players (in clockwise order) choose to either "pass" or "take" the disaster card. To pass, you must bid one resource of any of the types indicated, placing it on the table next to the disaster card. Turns will continue going around the table clockwise until a player chooses to take the disaster.

Once any player chooses to take, no more turns are taken by any players.

### When a player takes the disaster card, they do 4 things:

1. They gain the First Player marker.
2. They take ALL the resources that were bid on that disaster, putting those resources behind their screen.
3. They "destroy" the targeted location in their empire by turning it over to the burning side. If the targeted location was already destroyed, they must pick one of its adjacent locations to destroy. If both adjacent locations are destroyed, they must pick the next closest location to destroy.
4. They gain the innovation at the bottom of the disaster card, and assign it underneath a healthy location. See page 9 for more on gaining innovations.

After the player has completed these steps the Disaster phase is over.

### LOW RESOURCES

After taking a disaster, if a player has fewer than five combined resources, they may remove their screen, revealing all of their resources. Then, they may lose 2 points on the victory tracker to gain one coin. This may be repeated until the player has 5 combined resources. It is possible to go into negative victory points through doing this.



### EXAMPLE:

1. It's the 2nd Disaster phase of the game and a Fire Disaster has struck. Both players have their 3 point Farm in the 9th spot of their Empire. Both players place a fire meeple on that Farm to show that it's at risk.
2. Player B took the last Disaster so they begin bidding. B decides to bid one wheat.
3. Player A does not want to lose their Farm, so they bid one axe, returning the bid to B.
4. Player B decides that they are okay losing their Farm. They flip it over indicating it is destroyed.
5. Player B gets all the resources that were previously bid (their own wheat and Player A's axe) AND they get to place the Fire Disaster under one of their healthy locations so that the green Economy Innovation part of it is showing.

## Double Disaster Phase

Double Disaster phases only occur in games with 3-4 players. In a double disaster phase, reveal two disasters. All players mark both targeted locations by using both Disaster markers.

Then, starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise, each player must choose to bid on or take each disaster, in either order.

Resources gained from taking one disaster can be used to bid on the other, but both disasters must be addressed during your turn.

The first player marker is given to whoever takes the second disaster.

Note that it is possible for both disasters in a Double Disaster phase to target the same location. In this case, a player taking both disasters would have to use the adjacency rules on page 5 to determine where the second disaster strikes.



## Economy Phase

In the Economy Phase each player may use each of their Economy abilities in healthy (non-destroyed) locations. This includes starting abilities and Innovation abilities.

All players complete their economy effects simultaneously, in any order. Wait to move onto the next round until every player has completed their economy phase.

**IMPORTANT:** You may NOT use any Innovation abilities attached to destroyed locations, but those innovations are not discarded. They are left in place and may be used again if that location is repaired.

Economy abilities do a variety of things, usually gaining you resources or converting a resource into other resources. Details for what different innovation abilities do is included on page 10.



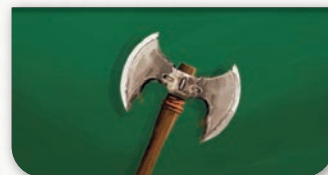
### STARTING ECONOMY ABILITIES



Gain 1 Wheat Token.



Gain 1 Hammer Token.



Gain 1 Axe Token.



You may convert 1 Food into 1 Hammer OR 1 Axe. You may do this conversion up to 2 times. This conversion is completely optional.



Refresh all exhausted abilities attached to locations adjacent to this one.

Certain abilities can become "Exhausted" and they cannot be used again until they are refreshed. They are marked with a wood cube to indicate their Exhausted status and this ability refreshes them by removing that cube.

### EXAMPLE:

1. It's the Economy phase and this player activates all the green abilities in their empire on or under healthy locations.
2. For this player that means they get 1 hammer from their 11 point Farm. 1 Axes from their 8 point farm, but not the wheat from their 3 point farm because that location is destroyed.
3. They'll also get to activate the various trade powers they have, including the option to trade wheat for hammers OR axes in their 14-point road (3a), and the option to trade wheat for hammers AND axes with the innovation Economy (3b).
4. Note that they don't have any exhausted ability innovations, so their other two roads do nothing at this time.

*In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity.*  
- Sun Tzu

## Industry Phase

In the Industry Phase each player does the following things in any order:

1. **Twice, build a card or sell a card from your hand.**
2. **Optionally, repair 1 destroyed location in your empire.**

During the Industry Phase, players may build up to two cards from their hand of 4 disaster cards. Each card normally costs one hammer (or coin) to build, but certain innovations cost an extra hammer, as indicated by a +🔨 icon above their ability. Building a card means you gain the innovation and attach it to a valid location in your empire (see Gaining and Placing Innovations to the ). As always, coins can be used to replace hammers.

Each healthy town in your empire makes one card one hammer cheaper to build. If both of your towns are healthy, both of your cards may be free to play. You may not use both town to make a card with +🔨 completely free; their effects must be applied to different Innovation cards.

Instead of building a card, you may instead sell a card by discarding it and gaining a coin from the supply. Thus, you could build 2 cards, sell 2 cards and gain 2 coins, or or build 1 card and sell 1 card to gain 1 coin. After building or selling 2 cards, you may now optionally discard all remaining cards in your hand.

If you discard one, you have to discard both, you cannot keep just one. Afterwards, draw until you have 4 Disaster cards in your hand.

2. **Optionally, repair 1 destroyed location in your empire.**

The cost to repair a destroyed location is indicated beneath its name on the card. You must pay the indicated number of Hammers and Coins to the bank to flip the location tile back over to the healthy (non-destroyed) side.

**IMPORTANT:** You may only repair one location each Industry Phase. If you repaired a location with an industry effect, you may use that ability, as well as the abilities of any innovations underneath it, this round. Players may also use any other Industry abilities in healthy locations.

3. **Complete any industry abilities.**

Certain locations and innovations have Industry abilities. At the start of the game, only the City has an industry action.

Industry abilities do a variety of things. Details for what different abilities do is included at the end of the rules.

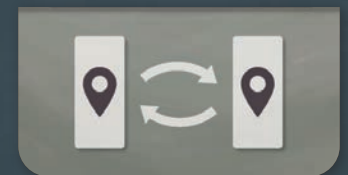


## STARTING INDUSTRY ABILITIES:



This reduces the cost of one of your Innovation purchases this phase by 1 hammer (step 1 above).

*Note, you have two copies of this ability at the start of the game, so as long these abilities do not get destroyed, your card buys will usually be free, unless they cost +🔨.*



Choose any two locations in your empire and swap their positions. All attached Innovations on the swapped locations move with them.

## GAINING AND PLACING INNOVATIONS:

In two separate phases players will gain Innovations. During the Disaster phase, Innovations are gained by taking the current disaster(s). During the Industry phase, Innovations are gained by building them from your hand of 4 cards.

In either case, when an Innovation is gained:

1. Place the Innovation under a healthy location so that only the special effect at the bottom of the card is showing.
2. Innovations can never be placed under a destroyed location tile.
3. Innovations can be placed under any healthy location that has the least (or tied with the least) innovations under it.
4. Players cannot place a second innovation under a location tile until every healthy location has at least one, and can't place a third until every healthy location tile has at least two. Continue this pattern as more Innovations begin to pile up under healthy locations. If a healthy location has multiple innovations underneath it, all are active.
5. If a location above an innovation is destroyed, but then later restored, the Innovation is activated again.
6. Each Innovation will provide a new ability or end-of-game effect for as long as the location it is under isn't destroyed.
7. Innovations always "travel with" the location they are under, even if that location is destroyed. So if you swap locations due to your City's effect, or due to an Upheaval during Conflict, make sure the Innovations under those locations stay under them. Note that there is an Industry power that lets you move an Innovation to another location – this is an exception to this rule.



## Conflict Phase

In the Conflict Phase, perform the following actions in order:

1. Turn over the top card of the Conflict deck and place it in the middle of the play area.
2. Total each player's starting Conflict strength from healthy locations and Innovations. Any red ability that grants (X) adds that value to the player's starting Conflict strength (for example, your Army locations grant 2 Conflict strength each).
3. Each player then secretly puts any number of axes (and/or coins) from behind their screen into their hand, then holds their hand out in a fist. When all players are ready, they reveal how many axes/coins they put in their hand. The number of axes/coins you revealed plus your conflict strength from abilities is your total conflict strength.
4. Each player then compares their total Conflict strength to the revealed Conflict card, and gains (or loses) the victory points and other bonuses as indicated. (Points gained are tracked on the point track on the outside edge of the turn board.) Additionally, whichever player(s) had the most conflict strength gains the Victory bonus.
5. Finally, all players who did not have the highest total Conflict strength must make the location swap indicated at the bottom of the conflict card. This will be swapping either their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd highest VP value healthy location with whatever card is in the location number indicated.
6. All Axes and coins revealed during the hidden bid are discarded back to the bank. The revealed Conflict card can be put in a discard pile. The Conflict Phase is now over.

### ANATOMY OF A CONFLICT CARD



- A. Victory: These points and resource tokens are granted to the player(s) having the most, or tied for most, Conflict strength.
- B. The three point-thresholds describe the consequences/rewards for achieving a certain Conflict strength. You may only achieve one of these and receiving negative points from not having a high enough Conflict strength can send you into negative points on the turn board point track.
- C. The amount of victory points received (or lost) for each outcome.
- D. The amount of resource tokens rewarded for each outcome. Conflict cards may also refresh exhausted abilities, which will be indicated by a refresh icon.
- E. The Upheaval box describes the outcome for all the players who did not have the highest total Conflict strength. These players are penalized by having two location tiles (and their attached innovations) swap places.

## CONFLICT EXAMPLE

If this is the current Conflict card, and you have a total of 5 Conflict strength, you will gain 5VP and 1 coin.



**Opponent A** has 3 Conflict strength, so they get no bonus but avoid the penalty for having 2 or less conflict strength.



**Opponent B** had 8 conflict strength, so they get 7 VP, plus two wheat, plus 3 more VP and 1 coin for having the most conflict strength.



Next, you must swap your 1st highest VP value prosperous location, and everything attached to it, with whatever location is the eleventh card in your empire counting from left to right. If the eleventh location in your empire is also your 1st highest VP value prosperous location, then you do nothing. **Opponent A** must also do the same.

Finally, axes and coins revealed by all players during this conflict are discarded back to the bank.

“

*Success is nearest to those whose efforts are intense and sincere.*

*- Patanjali*

”

## Industry/ Economy Phase

Near the end of the Progress Track in 3-4 player games is a Phase that is both an Industry and Economy Phase. Each player independently decides to either first complete an Economy Phase and then an Industry Phase or vice versa. A player must complete the first phase before starting the other, they cannot intermix parts of their Economy Phase with parts of their Industry Phase.

## End of Game

When the Progress Track reaches the end space, the game ends, and players calculate their final score, tracking points on the VP track around the outside of the main board.

Players add the VP value of all healthy locations in their empire to their current score.

Then, they add VP from any END OF GAME innovation abilities they have attached to Healthy locations.

This is their final score.

**The player with the most Victory Points wins.**

### Tie Breaker

In the event of a tie, the winner is the player closest to the current first player, traveling clockwise.



INDUSTRY/ECONOMY PHASE

“ *Success is nearest to those whose efforts are intense and sincere.*

- Lao Tzu



WINNER!

“ *People in their handling of affairs often fail when they are about to succeed. If one remains as careful at the end as he was at the beginning, there will be no failure.*

- Lao Tzu

## Ability Glossary & FAQ

### CONVERT 1 WHEAT INTO 1 COIN



This conversion may be completed up to three times each Economy Phase.

Other abilities like this work similarly, allowing you to convert a resource (always a coin or wheat) into other resources, and they indicate the number of times the conversion can be completed each Economy Phase. If there is a +, acquire both resources.



### REPEAT ECONOMY ABILITY

Repeat one other Economy ability you have.

Choose any other Economy Phase ability in the same kingdom and complete it an additional time. This can be from Innovations or starting abilities.

### POINTS FOR ADJACENT DESTROYED LOCATIONS



During the Economy phase, gain the listed number of points for each destroyed location adjacent to this Innovation.

### GAIN 1 TOKEN



Gain 1 Wheat token if there is a healthy Farm location directly to the left, and 1 Wheat token if there is a healthy Farm location directly to the right. Meaning, depending on the position of this ability in the empire, it can grant 0, 1, or 2 Wheat tokens each Economy Phase.

Similar abilities also give resources or VP based on being adjacent to various types of healthy locations.

Note: while this ability requires adjacent locations to be healthy, it still, as always, requires its own location to be healthy.

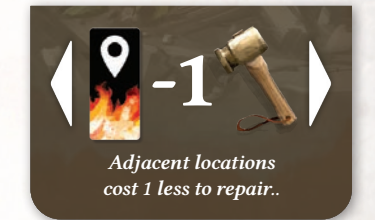


### GAIN POINTS



Gain the listed number of points during the Economy phase. Mark those points on the point track.

### DISCOUNT ADJACENT REPAIRS



During the industry phase, adjacent locations cost one less hammer to repair.

### MOVE INNOVATION



Choose an innovation attached to any location and reattach it to any other location. This placement must follow all normal rules for placing an innovation.

### REMOVE AN ADJACENT EXHAUST MARKER



This ability is identical to the Refresh ability of the Economy phase, except that it is activated during the Industry phase.

“ *When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.*

- Herodotus

### FREE BID TOKEN



Exhaust this ability to Pass one turn on a disaster card that requires an Axe bid. See more on this ability on page 6. Other abilities like this allow Passing on disasters requiring Wheat and Hammers.



### REPLACE A CURRENT DISASTER



At any point during the Disaster phase (even after multiple rounds of bidding) you may exhaust this ability to discard the current disaster (or one of the current disasters in a Double Disaster phase), and replace it with a new Disaster drawn from the top of the Disaster deck.

All previously bid resources are kept with the new Disaster, but the targeted location may change.

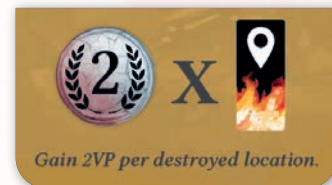
Note that using this ability does not let you skip your bid for this turn. You must bid or pass before or after replacing the disaster.

### GAIN 1 CONFLICT STRENGTH



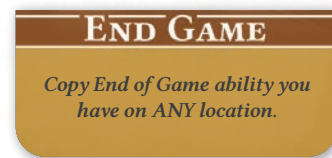
During the Conflict phase, every Location or Innovation that has a **X** adds 1 to your base Conflict strength.

### DESTROYED LOCATION SCORING



At the end of the game, score 2 victory points for every destroyed location in the empire. Do not score for destroyed locations in other players empires.

### COPY AN END OF GAME ABILITY



During the End Game phase, score another End of Game ability a second time.

### ENDGAME POINTS FOR ADJACENT DESTROYED LOCATIONS



During the End Game phase, gain the listed number of points for each destroyed location adjacent to this Innovation.

### END GAME TOKEN SCORING



At the end of the game, score the listed amount of victory points for each token of the listed type in the empire's stash. During end game scoring, coins can only count as coins, not as other resources.

### ENDGAME POINTS FOR ADJACENT LOCATIONS



During the End Game phase, gain the listed number of points for each adjacent location of the listed type.

### POINTS FOR MOST DESTROYED LOCATIONS



During the End Game phase, score 13 victory points if you have the most or tied for the most destroyed locations out of all the players.

“

*After I'm dead, I'd rather have people ask why I have no monument than why I have one.*

- Marcus Porcius Cato

”

## CREDITS

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# EMPIRE'S END

SEE THE QUICK START ON THE BACK FOR MORE INFO!

“

*I have restored that which was in ruins, I have raised up that which was unfinished.*

- Hatshepsut

”



# Quick Start Guide



## SETUP (PAGE 3)

1. Shuffle the Disaster and Conflict decks and set to the side. Place the appropriate number of Score markers on the zero spot of the score track. Place the hourglass Turn marker on the spot marked "Start." Give the temple First Player marker to a randomly selected player.
2. Each player gets a set of 11 location tiles, 2 of each resource token (hidden behind their privacy screen), 2 disaster markers, and four randomly dealt disaster cards.
3. The first player randomly arranges their location tiles and the other players exactly match that arrangement with their own tiles.

## GAME PLAY

The game is played in a series of phases indicated on the game board. At the beginning of the game, players advance the hourglass token from the START space to the first space. After completing each phase, advance the turn marker to the next phase and continue.

### DISASTER PHASE (PAGE 5)

1. During each Disaster phase, flip over a random Disaster card. The number in the top right of that card indicates which location in your empire is at risk of destruction (counting from the left). Starting with the first player, players may pay one resource (of the types shown on the card) to avoid having the disaster strike their empire. Players continue, in turn order, paying this cost until someone chooses not to pay.



2. If you choose not to pay, the Disaster will destroy a location in your empire.



3. But...you'll receive all resources paid by all players for that Disaster and add its Innovation to a healthy location you empire!



### ECONOMY PHASE (PAGE 7)

1. During Economy phases, activate green abilities to gain resources and refresh innovations.



### INDUSTRY PHASE (PAGE 8)

1. During Industry phases, use brown abilities and build innovations from your hand.



2. You may spend the indicated number of hammers to rebuild one location and it needs a highlighted indicator pointing to the hammers on the back of a razed location tile.
3. You may pay 1 hammer each to play a card from your hand under a healthy location in your empire. Each healthy town you have makes this placement free!

### CONFLICT PHASE (PAGE 10)

1. During Conflict phases, draw a Conflict card and secretly bid hammers and gold.
2. Add that value to the number of icons in your empire.
3. Assign rewards and consequences based on the Conflict card.



### END OF GAME (PAGE 11)

1. Add up the point value of all healthy locations in your Empire.
2. Add points from End of Game innovations and the victory track.
3. The empire with the highest score is victorious!

