



# Legend of the Five Rings

## Samurai Edition

Core Rules Preview,  
June 1, 2007



## INTRODUCTION

Legend of the Five Rings (L5R) is a collectible card game set in the Asian-inspired fantasy empire of Rokugan. Each player brings a customized deck of cards to the game; this starter deck is a complete, playable deck on its own. You develop your deck by purchasing additional starters and booster packs, and by trading cards with other players.

In this game, you take the part of a leader in one of Rokugan's samurai Clans, caught up in a struggle to control the Empire. Starting from just a family stronghold, you will recruit Personalities representing the heroes or villains of Rokugan, and work toward victory using the deck you have built.

Raising armies and attacking your enemy's provinces is only one way to win in L5R. You can turn back a mighty army by calling on the favor of the Imperial Court, casting a powerful magic spell, or sending a hired assassin after its general. You can reach victory through deeds of honor, or be destroyed in court by dishonorable choices and political sabotage. You can even win by becoming a mystic enlightened leader, mastering the insight of the Five Elemental Rings as you fight for your clan.

## LEARNING TO PLAY

The Core Rules section of this rulebook will get you into the action of playing L5R. After explaining how to read the cards, it shows you how to set up your deck at the start of a game, and explains the sequence each player follows in a turn.

Once you understand these basics, you can start a game with another player, consulting the Rules Glossary as needed to understand the terms you find on cards. After the Glossary comes a Clan Guide, which describes basic strategies and play styles of your Clan.



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## THE CARDS

The cards that come with this rulebook will let you build a fully legal and playable Samurai Edition deck. All the same, you may soon find yourself adding cards to the deck or building a completely new one. Rules on how to build a deck come at the end of the Core Rules.

The game is played with two decks of cards, the Dynasty deck of black-backed cards and the Fate deck of green-backed cards. These two decks plus your Stronghold make up your play deck.

**TIP:** You should first separate out the Dynasty and Fate cards from each other. Before you play your first game of L5R, you and your opponent should each look through the cards in your deck, using this card type guide. Once you have some idea what each type of card does, starting the game will be a lot easier.

### STRONGHOLD

This card represents your starting castle, or some other base of operations. It can have either a Fate or Dynasty back, and does not go into your decks. You start with one in play.



- A: Card Title
- B: Clan Mon
- C: Base Province Strength
- D: Gold Production
- E: Starting Family Honor
- F: Text Box

A Stronghold is a special kind of card. No other card can target or affect your stronghold unless it specifically mentions the word "Stronghold." For example, if someone plays a card that lets them destroy "any card," it cannot destroy your Stronghold. But if someone plays a card that lets them straighten "a Stronghold," it can straighten your Stronghold.

**Card Title:** At the top of the Stronghold in a white bar is its title (key A). All L5R cards have a title.

**Clan Mon:** At the top right of the Stronghold is a round symbol, or *mon* (key B) that shows you what Clan the Stronghold represents. You are a player of your Stronghold's Clan.

**Base Province Strength:** Your Stronghold gives your base Province Strength number (key C). High Province Strength means your lands can resist attacks more easily.

**Gold Production:** Your Stronghold also has a Gold Production number (key D). This shows how much Gold your stronghold produces to put other cards into play.

**Starting Family Honor:** The final number on a Stronghold is Starting Family Honor (key E). Clans known for noble and pure behavior have a high Family Honor, while clans known for villainy have a Family Honor closer to zero. Your Family Honor score (Honor, for short) may rise during the game, as virtuous people join your cause, and you do noble deeds in battle and court. It may also fall – even below zero – if you use dishonorable means or if you are the victim of political intrigue. You lose the game instantly if your Family Honor ever becomes –20 or lower, and win the game if you start your turn with your Family Honor at or above 40.

**Text Box:** Like all other L5R cards, the Stronghold has a text box (key F). A text box holds keywords, traits, and abilities that say what the card is and what it can do. For more information on the text box, see p. 21.

L5R cards also have a line of small text at the bottom, with an abbreviation for the card's set, its number within the set, a symbol showing its rarity, and the artist's name. Some cards may have a line of small text down the right side, showing that the card was designed as a result of a storyline effect and giving credit to the player responsible. The small text does not usually have an effect on game play.

### RARITY SYMBOLS

At the bottom of every card is a line of text including the set the card is printed in, the artist's name, copyright info, the card's number within the set, and a symbol indicating rarity. The different rarity symbols are:

- |            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| ● Common   | ★ Starter only |
| ◆ Uncommon | ▼ Promo        |
| ★ Rare     |                |



## DYNASTY CARD TYPES

### HOLDING

These cards represent resources available in your lands. Most Holdings produce Gold, expanding the income available to you beyond the production on your Stronghold.



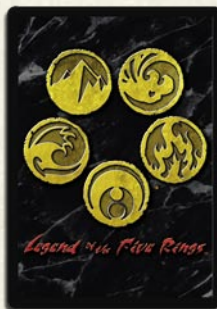
A: Gold Production

B: Gold Cost

C: Honor Production

*Money is a thing that will be there when asked for. A good man is not so easily found.*

Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure*



Remember, Dynasty cards have black backs, like this.

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**Gold Production:** A Holding's Gold Production stat (key A) is the base amount of Gold it produces. Keep in mind that the Holding's text will often change this amount.

**Gold Cost:** Holdings also have a Gold Cost (key B) which you must pay before you bring them into play.

**Honor Production:** Some Holdings have abilities that add to your Family Honor. These Holdings will have an Honor Production stat as a reminder (key C).

## DYNASTY CARD TYPES

### PERSONALITY

A Personality card represents one of the notable characters of Rokugan. Personalities account for most of the action in the game. They attack and defend Provinces, challenge each other to duels, and have other abilities and uses.



A: Force

B: Chi

C: Honor Requirement

D: Gold Cost

E: Personal Honor

**Force:** A Personality's Force (key A) stands for strength in battle, and is abbreviated as "F."

**Chi:** Chi (key B) stands for inner strength. Chi helps resolve duels and other effects. Chi is abbreviated as "C." If a Personality's Chi is ever zero, destroy him or her immediately.

**Honor Requirement:** Personalities may have an Honor Requirement (key C) making them more difficult to recruit when your Family Honor does not meet their standards. A dash (-) in this area shows that the Personality has no Honor Requirement.

**Gold Cost:** Personalities have a Gold Cost (key D) which you must pay any time you bring them into play.

**Personal Honor:** Personal Honor (key E) stands for inner virtue and perceived honor in the eyes of society. Its abbreviation is "PH."

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## DYNASTY CARD TYPES

### EVENT

Events represent important happenings in Rokugani life. They appear unpredictably in your Provinces. They resolve when you reveal them in your Events Phase.



*It is a principle of the art of war that one should simply lay down his life and strike. If one's opponent also does the same, it is an even match. Defeating one's opponent is then a matter of faith and destiny.*

Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure*

### REGION

Regions identify a Province with a particular area in Rokugan. They attach to the Province they are revealed in and have special traits and abilities.



*While they are away  
Leaves pile up  
In the gardens of the gods*

Bashō

## FATE CARD TYPES

### ACTION

Action cards are one-shot cards you play from your hand and then discard. An action card usually has one or more **Limited**, **Open**, **Battle**, or **Reaction** abilities.



A: Gold Cost

B: Focus Value

*In battle, if you you make your opponent flinch, you have already won.*

Miyamoto Musashi, *Go Rin No Sho*

**Gold Cost:** Action cards have a Gold Cost (key A). This is often zero, but sometimes a higher number. The Gold Cost is part of the cost of any action on the card.

**Focus Value:** Like all Fate cards, Action cards also have a Focus Value (key B) that is used in resolving duels.



Remember, Fate cards have green backs, like this.



## FATE CARD TYPES

### RING

The Rings show understanding of the five mystic elements from which Legend of the Five Rings takes its name. You may put Rings into play when you have fulfilled their condition for entering play. You can also discard them from your hand for a one-shot effect.



*My gardener of chrysanthemums  
You are become their servant*

Buson



## FATE CARD TYPES

### ATTACHMENTS

Followers, Items and Spells are all *attachment* cards.

Attachment cards enter play by being attached to a Personality, placing the card under the Personality with the title showing.



Attaching usually happens during the Action Phase. An Attachment's Gold Cost must be paid before it enters play.

A Personality and all his or her attached cards make up a *unit*. If a Personality leaves play (for example, by being destroyed), all cards in the unit leave play in the same way. When a unit is targeted, this targets its Personality, not any other cards in the unit.





## FATE CARD TYPES

### FOLLOWER

Followers represent troops, creatures, or advisors under the command of a Personality.



A: Force

B: Honor Requirement

C: Gold Cost

*When you cannot be deceived by men you will have realized the wisdom of strategy.*

Miyamoto Musashi, Go Rin No Sho

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Followers have Force (key A) which helps their unit in battle. Followers also have an Honor Requirement (key B), which is the minimum Personal Honor a Personality must have to attach that Follower, and a Gold Cost (key C).



Illus. William O'Connor

## FATE CARD TYPES

### ITEM

Items represent special objects and artifacts held by a Personality.



A: Force Modifier

B: Chi Modifier

C: Gold Cost

*The warrior's is the twofold way of pen and sword, and he should have a taste for both ways.*

Miyamoto Musashi, Go Rin No Sho

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Unlike Followers, Items have a Force modifier (key A) that directly alters their Personality's Force, rather than a Force of their own. Items likewise have a Chi modifier (key B), and they have a Gold Cost (key C).



Illus. Christopher Appel



## FATE CARD TYPES

### SPELL

Spells represent magic scrolls used by a Shugenja (a person trained in the magic of Rokugan). Spells can only attach to a Shugenja.



A: Gold Cost

*It is a good viewpoint to see the world as a dream. When you have something like a nightmare, you will wake up and tell yourself that it was only a dream. It is said that the world we live in is not a bit different from this.*

Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure*

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Spells have no Force or Chi bonus, just a Gold Cost (key A).



Illus. Stephanie Pui-Mun Law

## READING THE CARDS

### STATS

Force, Chi, Province Strength and Gold Cost are examples of stats, or number values. Stats may gain bonuses or penalties from effects in the game, and effects may also give stats a minimum or maximum value. Most stats have a minimum value of zero; only Honor Requirement, Family Honor, and modifiers with a + or – sign can have negative values.

### TEXT BOX

The text box on a card tells you its game effects and limitations. All cards should be read keeping in mind the first Cardinal Rule of L5R:

*If the text of any card contradicts the rulebook, follow the card text, not the rulebook.*

There are four parts to the text box. Not every card will have all four parts.

### KEYWORDS

A keyword is a phrase of one or more words, in **boldface** type, that appears near the top of a text box. Keywords help describe a card. For example, a Personality can be aligned to the **Phoenix Clan** and a **Samurai**; a Holding can be tainted with the corruption of the **Shadowlands**; an item can be a **Weapon**, and so on.

Some keywords have meaning in the rules, while others are only descriptive terms. For example, **Cavalry** is a special keyword that works with the rules about assigning to battle. On the other hand, **Beastmaster** is a keyword that has no special rule, but effects on other cards may do things for or against **Beastmasters**.

Keywords are separated from each other by solid dots (•). If keywords appear on more than one line in a text box, the ones on different lines are separate as well. A keyword may be made up of multiple words, like “**Dragon Clan**,” but it is treated as a single phrase; so a “**Dragon Clan**” Personality is not the same as a “**Dragon**.”

### TRAITS

After a card's keywords come its *traits*: sentences or phrases in normal print. They describe the card's special effects or restrictions.

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Some traits are *triggered traits*. These start with a *trigger*, a reference ending in a colon (:) to something that can happen in the game – for example, “Before your turn ends:” or “After this Personality enters play:” A trigger can also involve costs which must be paid for the effects to occur. After the colon, there will be effects that happen whenever that trigger occurs, such as “Gain 2 Honor.”

In traits and abilities, a card may refer directly to its own title; for example, a card named “Togashi Wotan” may read “Bow Wotan.” This refers to the card itself, and not to any other copy of the card with the same name.

### ABILITIES

Below any traits, there may be one or more abilities: blocks of text that create actions when used. An ability starts with one or more of the boldface designator terms “**Limited:**” “**Open:**” “**Battle:**” or “**Reaction:**” that shows when its action can be taken.

An ability with two designators such as “**Battle/Open:**” can be used at either designator’s time, and is treated as both (for example, when searching for a card with Battle action, a Battle/Open action counts).

Some abilities have one or more keywords before the designator, such as “**Political Limited:**” or “**Kiho Battle:**” Ability keywords are treated as separate single words. These keywords, and any keywords of the card itself, apply to the ability, the action it creates, and its effects. For example, an action has the keyword **Fire** if the word “**Fire**” is one of the card’s keywords at the top of the text box, or if the “**Fire**” keyword appears before the designator, as in “**Fire Battle:**”.

Sometimes, after the designator, there is text followed by a second colon (:). For example, “**Open:** Bow this card: Gain 1 Honor.” Anything between the designator and the second colon is part of the *constraints block*, and is either targeting, a trigger, a condition, or a cost of the action. For more information on these terms, see “When Can I Take an Action?” (p. 28)

After the constraints block, if any, comes the *effects block*. This describes the effects the action has when it resolves. All abilities have an effects block.

Examples:

**Limited:** If your Family Honor is 10 or less, discard a card and target one of your Courtiers: Gain 1 Honor.

This ability has a constraints block. In this block, the phrase “if your Family Honor is

10 or less” is a condition, “discard a card” is a cost, and “target one of your Courtiers” is targeting. It also has one effect, “Gain 1 Honor.”

**Battle:** Give a target Personality –2F. Bow him.

This ability has only one colon, so it has no costs, triggers or conditions. It involves targeting a Personality and two effects: giving him –2 Force, and bowing him.

(To save space, card text uses the generic “he” to refer to personalities – and players – of any gender.)

### FLAVOR TEXT

At the bottom of the text box, in italic type, comes a card’s *flavor text*: a short quote that tells you about the world of Rokugan. Flavor text has no game effect.



*Illus. Drew Baker*



## SETTING UP THE GAME

### STRONGHOLDS

After you have separated cards into Dynasty and Fate decks, look through both decks and pull out any Strongholds you find. Look on p. 10 of the rulebook for a picture of a Stronghold.

Your starter deck comes with two Strongholds that have their Clan's color and symbol, but different titles and abilities. Choose one Stronghold to play with and put any other Strongholds away.

Rarely, you may find a bonus Stronghold with no Clan symbol randomly packed in a starter or booster pack. If you use such a stronghold with the Personalities in this starter deck, you will be at a disadvantage. It is recommended that you use a normal Clan stronghold for your first few games.

Stronghold cards do not go in decks. You start with one in play. Put your Stronghold face up in front of your Provinces, in your home area.

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### GOING FIRST

The player with the higher starting Family Honor goes first. If you are tied, choose who goes first at random.

### LEGACY HOLDINGS

In L5R, a player who isn't going first gets a free Holding. If you're not going first, you may now search your Dynasty deck for a Holding card with the **Legacy** keyword. Bring one out and put it into play bowed beside your Stronghold. A Legacy holding you put in play this way cannot straighten until after your third game turn begins.

### BOWING AND STRAIGHTENING

Bowing and straightening cards is an important part of the game. A bowed card is turned 90 degrees to the right to show that it has spent its efforts. Costs and effects in the game may *bow* an unbowed card, or *straighten* a bowed card, returning it to the unbowed state. Only cards in play can bow or straighten.

## DECKS AND DISCARD PILES

After the Legacy holding has been brought out, shuffle your two decks separately, give your opponent a chance to cut or shuffle them, and put them on the table in front of you. The Fate deck goes about where your right hand is; the Dynasty deck about where your left hand is.

Dynasty cards you discard during play will go to a face-up discard pile to the left of the Dynasty deck. Fate cards you discard will go to their own face-up discard pile to the right of the Fate deck.

If a Personality in play is destroyed, turn him 90 degrees to the right while in the discard pile. This shows that he is dead and not just discarded.



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Illus. Janine Johnston



## PROVINCES

Next, take the top four cards from the Dynasty deck and lay them face down side by side, from left to right, between the two decks. These cards mark your Provinces: game areas that stand for your clan's lands. Provinces hold Dynasty cards, one card to a Province. You will bring Dynasty cards into play from the Provinces later on in the game.

If a Province is ever left without a card, you refill it with a face-down card from the top of your Dynasty deck, after resolving any effects from the card that left the Province. You can not normally look at face-down cards in Provinces, even your own.

Each Province has a separate Province Strength stat, whose base value is the Stronghold's Province Strength, and can be raised and lowered by game effects.

## THE HAND

Draw five cards from the top of your Fate deck and hold them so you can see their faces and your opponent cannot. This is your hand. Cards in it are considered face-down.

In your first games, the Fate cards won't matter much until you get some Personalities into play, so feel free to put the hand aside for a couple of turns.

## OTHER EQUIPMENT

You are almost ready to start playing, but it's a good idea to have a couple more things on hand.

- Both players need to keep track of their current Family Honor, recording increases or decreases from the starting value on the Stronghold. Paper and pencil or a set of dice will do.
- The Imperial Favor represents the good graces of the court. A token, figure, coin, or other object is required to show who has the Imperial Favor. At the start of the game, no player controls the Favor; put it in the middle of the table.

The starting player is now ready to take his or her first turn, following this turn sequence.

## THE TURN SEQUENCE

### 1. STRAIGHTEN PHASE

As the player whose turn it is, you straighten all your bowed cards, including your Stronghold.

**TIP:** *You should have nothing bowed on your first turn, except possibly a Legacy holding – and if you have a Legacy holding out because you didn't go first, remember that it can't straighten until your third turn.*

### 2. EVENTS PHASE

In the Events Phase, you get to see what Dynasty cards you can buy later in the turn, and you may have to resolve Events. Starting with your leftmost Province, turn its card face-up. Then:

- If it is a Holding or Personality, nothing happens now.
- If it is an Event, take it out of its Province. Its effects resolve immediately. After an Event card resolves, if it hasn't been put in play by its own effects, discard it. Remember to refill the Province.

A player can only resolve each Event, by title, once per game. However, a player can still resolve an Event if another player has resolved an Event with the same title.

- If it is a Region, it must enter play attached to the province it was revealed in. Move the Region up partway in the Province. When you refill the Province, leave the Region's title visible.





Provinces cannot attach more than one Region. If there is already a Region on the Province, or it's otherwise illegal to attach the new Region, discard it immediately. Once a Region is in play, its traits apply to you and you can use its abilities.

Then do the same for each of your other Provinces, moving from left to right.

### 3. ACTION PHASE

**TIP:** *If you are in the first two turns of your first game, you may skip ahead to section 5 (Dynasty Phase) – nothing usually happens during the Action and Attack Phases if you have no Personalities in play.*

**TIP:** *If you have any Personalities in play, your goal during the Action Phase should be to prepare for battle. Give your Personalities attachments, make ready for attack or defense, gain Honor, or take the Imperial Favor if you have higher Honor than your opponent. If you are thinking about spending Gold in the Action Phase, remember to look at your Provinces first, to see whether there's something you'd rather buy with that Gold in the Dynasty Phase later on.*

In the Action Phase, players carry out intrigues and prepare for war.

As the player whose turn it is, or *active player*, you have the first option in the Action Phase to take a Limited or Open action.

If you can't take such an action or don't want to, you pass. The other player then has a chance to take an Open action or pass. If a player passes, he or she can still take an action later on in the phase. The Action Phase ends when both players pass, one right after the other.

This kind of procedure, taking actions in turn until both players pass one after the other, is called an *action round*. The following rules about actions apply to actions taken at any point in the game.

#### WHEN CAN I TAKE AN ACTION?

You can normally take actions from abilities on action cards and Rings in your hand, from abilities on your cards in play, or from special abilities that are granted to you by the rules or card effects.

Limited actions are taken in the Action Phase only by the active player. Open actions are taken in the Action Phase by any player.

Battle actions can only be taken during a battle's Combat Segment.

Reactions give a point in time, or trigger, when they can be taken. "After your Events Phase ends," "Before you would lose Honor," and "When you produce Gold" are examples of triggers. Reactions don't count against your chance to take a Limited, Open or Battle action in the current action round.

If more than one Reaction can be triggered at the same point in time, their order is resolved by a separate action round. The active player has the first opportunity to take a Reaction to the trigger or pass, and the action round continues until both players pass consecutively.

To take an action, do the following things in order:

#### A. CHECK CONDITIONS

Some conditions may appear in an ability's constraints block, such as "If you control a Shugenja" or "If no other player has higher Honor than you." These conditions must be met for you to take the action.

There are three other limitations on abilities:

- Abilities on bowed cards cannot be used.
- A card must be in play, or be an Action card or Ring played from your hand, to use its abilities. Abilities that break this rule will say or imply that they can be used from an out-of-play area; for example "**Reaction:** After this card is destroyed:" implies that the card is in the discard pile, so the action is legal to take.
- Each separate ability on each card can only be used once per turn, unless a different limit on uses is stated.

#### B. ANNOUNCE

To take an action, you start by announcing it, telling your opponent which card the action is coming from and which ability it is using. If the action comes from an Action card, take the card from your hand and keep it face-up.

#### C. REQUIRED TARGETING

An action may have a number of *targets* mentioned in its constraints or effects, using the word "target"; for example, "Target one of your Holdings" or "Bow a target



Samurai with less than 3 Force.” After announcing the action, you must choose all targets mentioned in the action, in the order they are mentioned.

Exception: Targeting mentioned in the effects block is not required at this time if it: is done by another player; is delayed in time (for example, “Before this turn ends, target...”); or is optional (for example, “You may target ...”). These kinds of targeting are done as effects resolve.

Normally, cards must be in play to be legal targets. But sometimes a target is described so that it can be in an out-of-play location: for example, “target a Holding that has been destroyed this turn” implies that the Holding is in the discard pile.

#### D. COSTS

After you choose required targets, you must pay any costs of the action, in the order mentioned. Anything in the constraints block that tells you to change the game state is a cost of the action; for example, “Bow one of your Samurai,” “Pay 3 Gold,” or “Give this Personality -1C.” The Gold Cost on an Action card is a cost of all its actions.

To pay a cost, the change must actually, fully happen. For example, you cannot pay the cost “Give one of your Shugenja **Shadowlands**” with a shugenja who already has the **Shadowlands** keyword, or cannot gain it. And, if a Personality has a Chi of 4 and a minimum Chi of 1, you can’t use him to pay the cost of giving him -4C, because the Chi penalty doesn’t happen fully.

Cards out of play can’t normally pay your costs, nor can other players’ cards.

It is sometimes important to know the difference between a card’s costs and its effects. For example, if a card has “Dishonor one of your target Personalities” as a cost, the cost can’t be paid by an already dishonored target; but if the dishonoring is an effect, the action still resolves for an already dishonored target. Another important point: targeting always happens before costs are paid, even though some targeting may be described in the effects block after costs are described.

#### E. EFFECTS

If all targets are met and costs are paid, resolve the action’s effects in the order they are mentioned. Once effects start to resolve, they continue resolving, no matter what happens to the card they came from.

If an action brings a card into play, you must pay the card’s Gold cost and other costs at that point, or it will not enter play.

Some effects may be *negated* (stopped from happening) before they resolve, or while they are ongoing. For example, an Oni with the trait “Cannot bow” negates any effects that would bow him; or someone might play a Reaction before he bows that says “Negate the card’s bowing.”

If an effect is negated, the action’s other effects still happen. For example, you can target that Oni with the trait “Cannot bow” using an action whose effects bow him and move him home; he does not bow, but he still moves home.

Cards that are out of play are not influenced by new effects from sources other than themselves. There are two exceptions:

- Effects that mention or imply an out-of-play area, such as the discard pile, can influence cards there.
- Effects can influence action cards that are being played, events that are resolving, cards that are about to enter play, and cards focused in a duel.

#### F. TIDY UP

Finally, if you took the action from an Action card in your hand, discard it.

#### TRAITS AND EFFECTS

Traits can also have effects. A triggered trait (see p. 22) is like a Reaction; it has a constraints block before its colon that contains conditions, triggers, and costs which must be paid for the effects after the colon to happen. There are four main differences between a triggered trait and a Reaction.

- A triggered trait is not optional; you must apply the effects when the trigger is met. A Reaction, like any action, is always optional to take.
- A triggered trait, unlike an action, can be used when its card is bowed.
- A triggered trait, unlike an action, is not restricted to once per turn.
- Triggered traits happen before any Reactions to the trigger can be taken.

A trait without a trigger, such as “Your Samurai each have +1F,” has a *continuous* effect that is “always on” while the card is in play and any conditions of the trait are met.



### HOW LONG DO THINGS LAST?

Some costs or effects are *instantaneous*, and marked by physical changes to the game components.

These include: bowing cards, dishonoring Personalities, adding tokens, control and creation of cards, control of the Favor, dead vs. discarded status, changes to the area a card is in, changes to attachments, and changes to Family Honor.

Such changes do not wear off by themselves, although they can be changed or undone by other effects.

Other costs or effects involve *ongoing* changes that are not physically marked by the game components. These include changes to stats such as "Gain +2F", as well as changes to abilities, traits, keywords and conditions of things in the game, such as giving a card the trait "The Personality cannot bow." *All ongoing costs or effects last until the end of the current turn*, unless they give a different duration.

*Continuous* effects from non-triggered traits apply when the card with the trait enters play and end when the card leaves play, while the other conditions on the trait are met. A continuous effect works on its own card even while the card is out of play. For example, a Samurai Personality with the trait "Your Samurai each have +1F" gives +1F to himself and your other Samurai while he is in play, but gives only himself +1F while he is out of play.

### ACTIONS AVAILABLE TO PLAYERS IN THE ACTION PHASE

There are a number of actions that all players may take in the Action Phase, each with its own descriptive term. Keep in mind that "Share" and "Lobby" are effectively once per turn because of the rules on actions.

#### EQUIP

**Limited:** Any number of times per turn, target one of your Personalities: Attach a target attachment card from your hand to him (*paying all costs*).

#### SHARE

**Open:** Bow one of your attachments: Transfer it to another of your target Personalities who can legally attach it.

### LOBBY

**Political Limited:** If you have a higher Family Honor than any other player, bow one of your target Personalities with Personal Honor of 1 or higher: Take control of the Imperial Favor.

### IMPERIAL FAVOR

The Imperial Favor is controlled by one player at a time, and starts the game uncontrolled. Discarding (giving up control of) the Favor is a cost of a number of actions in the game, including the following two actions available to all players:

**Political Limited:** Discard the Imperial Favor and a card: Draw a card.

("Discard a card" is shorthand for "Discard a Fate card from your hand.")

**Political Battle:** Discard the Imperial Favor: Move a target attacking enemy unit home.

### 4. ATTACK PHASE (optional)

After the Action Phase, the active player may optionally declare an attack against the other player. This creates an Attack Phase, in which you try to destroy your opponent's Provinces with your Personalities.

**Tip:** *At this point, check to see if you have Personalities and Followers in play with total Force greater than your opponent's Province Strength, or Battle Actions that will get your Force to that amount. If you can't get that much Force, there's no point in attacking right now. Concentrate on bringing in more Holdings and Personalities in your Dynasty Phase, and more attachments in your Action Phase.*

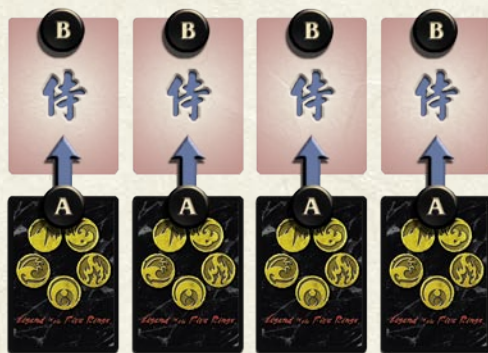
An Attack Phase has several segments that are followed in order.

#### A. DECLARATION SEGMENT

The player declaring the attack becomes the Attacker, and the other player becomes the Defender.

Create a *battlefield* associated with each of the Defender's Provinces. Battlefields are locations in a battle, with two sides – the attacking and defending sides. One or more units on a side at a battlefield make up an *army*.





A: Defender's Provinces

B: Associated Battlefields

### B. INFANTRY MANEUVERS SEGMENT

In the Maneuvers Segments, the players assign their units to battlefields. Assigning a unit places it at that battlefield, and is different from “moving” between locations during the rest of the battle. A unit led by a bowed Personality cannot assign.

In Infantry Maneuvers, the Attacker first simultaneously assigns any number of his or her units from his or her home to the attacking side at any of the battlefields. The Attacker may assign units to one battlefield or different battlefields, and may keep some or all of them home.

Then the Defender assigns units from home to the defending side at the battlefields, in the same way.

### C. CAVALRY MANEUVERS SEGMENT

A unit is Cavalry if its Personality, and all its Followers (if any), have the Cavalry keyword. A Cavalry unit has the advantage of being able to assign in Cavalry Maneuvers, after its player sees where other units have assigned.

In Cavalry Maneuvers, the Attacker and then the Defender assign any of their Cavalry units as in the Infantry Maneuvers segment.

### D. FIGHT BATTLES

The Attacker chooses a battlefield, and a battle is fought there. When that battle is over, the Attacker chooses a new battlefield and another battle is fought there. This repeats until all battlefields have been fought at.

Exactly one battle happens at each battlefield, even ones with no units.

## BATTLES

A battle is a way of resolving military conflict in L5R. Most battles will happen as part of an Attack Phase, but some effects create battles separately.

Each battle has a Combat Segment, followed by a Resolution Segment.

### COMBAT SEGMENT

The Combat Segment is an action round of Battle actions. The Defender has the first opportunity to take a Battle action or pass. Then, the Attacker has an opportunity to take a Battle action or pass, and the round continues until both players pass consecutively.

### WHEN CAN I TAKE A BATTLE ACTION?

Battle actions follow all the rules on actions, plus these two:

#### RULE OF PRESENCE

To legally take any Battle action, you must control a unit at the current battlefield.

#### RULE OF LOCATION

Cards in units must be at the current battlefield to be legally targeted by a Battle Action; likewise, to legally take a Battle action from a card in a unit, the unit must be at the current battlefield.

Exception: Actions that say they can move a unit to the current battlefield are legal if Presence and Location will be satisfied with the unit there. In this case, choices about movement effects must then be made to satisfy both Presence and Location, if possible.

Example: An ability on one of your Personalities says “Battle: Target another Personality. Move the target to this battlefield.” This action is legal even if the target is outside the current battlefield, because the action can move him there. However, your Personality must still be at the current battlefield due to the Rule of Location, because the action comes from him and does not move him there.

The rules of Presence and Location do not restrict Reactions taken during a battle.

There is one additional rule during a battle. A Personality who has already been in an



attacking army during battle resolution in that Attack Phase cannot move to a battlefield.

After both players have passed consecutively, the battle's Combat Segment ends.

#### RESOLUTION SEGMENT

The Attacker and Defender total their Force at the battlefield. An army's Force is the total of all its units' Force. A unit's Force is the total of the Force of all unbowed Personalities and Followers in it. Items contribute their Force directly to the Personality, even when bowed, and are not added separately to unit Force. A side with no units always has zero Force, even if an effect would add Force to the "army" there.

Then, compare the two Force totals. The side with the most Force wins.

If the Attacker wins, he or she destroys all units in the defending army. If the attacking army's Force was greater than the defending army's Force plus the Province Strength of the battlefield's Province, the Attacker also destroys the Province.

When a Province is destroyed, put any cards in it, as well as any Regions attached to it, into their owner's Dynasty discard pile. Push together the other Provinces and the two decks to show the shrinking of their owner's lands (see the diagram, below).

If the Defender wins, he or she destroys all units in the attacking army.

The winner of a battle also gains Honor equal to twice the number of cards in the enemy army that were destroyed through these effects of resolution.



If two armies, each with one or more units, have equal Force, the battle is a tie. In a tie, the Attacker and Defender each destroy all units in the opposing army, and each of them gains Honor equal to the number of cards they destroyed. If either or both sides have no units and their Force is equal, the battle has no outcome.

After resolution ends, all attacking units bow, then return home, as effects of resolution. Like assignment, this return after battle is not movement. Defending units stay at their battlefield, and return home only at the end of the Attack Phase or other effect that created a battle. They do not bow. The battle then ends.

After the end of the last battle, the Attack Phase ends. At this point, or at the end of any other effect that created a battle, battlefields cease to exist. Any units still there bow if they were attacking, and return home.

#### 5. DYNASTY PHASE

During the Dynasty Phase, in any order you like and as many times as possible, you can bring face-up Holdings and Personalities into play from your Provinces. Remember to refill your Provinces face-down once they become empty.

##### PAYING GOLD COSTS

Your Stronghold and most Holdings can be bowed to produce an amount of Gold. Gold produced by a single source must all be spent to pay for one cost immediately. Extra Gold does not carry over to other purchases, but is taxed by the Empire (and disappears). However, multiple sources of Gold can be added together to pay a cost.

##### BUY HOLDINGS FROM PROVINCES

Pay the Holding's Gold cost. This will put the Holding into play in your "home" area. Holdings always enter play bowed, so that they cannot immediately pay for other things.

##### BUY PERSONALITIES FROM PROVINCES

If your Family Honor is equal to or greater than the Honor Requirement of a face-up Personality in one of your Provinces, you may pay the Personality's Gold Cost, and he or she enters play in your home. If your Family Honor is below a Personality's Honor Requirement, you cannot bring the Personality into play at any time (but see the third bullet point on the next page).



Personalities with your Clan keyword are aligned with your Clan. When you bring them into play during the Dynasty Phase, and only then, they follow three special rules:

- You may bring into play a Personality aligned with your Clan paying 2 less Gold.
- If you haven't gained Honor this way during this Dynasty Phase, and aren't choosing to pay the 2 less Gold, you may choose to gain Honor equal to your aligned Personality's Personal Honor just before you bring him into play.
- If your Family Honor doesn't meet your aligned Personality's Honor Requirement, you may still bring him into play paying 2 more Gold than normal. Together with the rules above, this means you may pay the full Gold Cost and not gain any Honor, or pay 2 more than the full Gold Cost and gain Honor.

#### DISCARD FACE-UP CARDS

Before your Dynasty Phase ends, after you are done bringing cards into play, you may discard any number of face-up cards from your Provinces one at a time, refilling them immediately.

#### LEGACY HOLDINGS

Because it is important to be able to buy a Holding on your first turn, all players have the ability:

**Reaction:** After your Dynasty Phase ends, if you have brought no Holdings into play this turn, bow your Stronghold: Search your Dynasty deck, then any face-down cards in your provinces, for a Legacy Holding and put it into play.

Remember that this Holding enters play bowed, and that by the rules on searching (p. 51) you must reshuffle your deck after searching it.

#### TIPS ON THE DYNASTY PHASE

It's important to learn how to develop your Holdings and Personalities in the Dynasty Phase. In each Dynasty Phase you should have a goal for next turn's Dynasty Phase. Bring out cards, or discard them, to support that goal.

In your first turn's Dynasty Phase, your priority will be to buy a Holding. Even if you can buy a cheap Personality, a Holding is necessary to start building your Gold structure. In your first practice game, your goal will be to buy a Personality on your second turn so you can move quickly to attacking; your Stronghold and a Holding will buy most of the Personalities in your deck.

In a real game, most players prefer to buy two Holdings on their second turn, or a cheap Personality and a Holding, so that their Gold production will develop more strongly. Regardless of what your goal is, discard cards ruthlessly from your Provinces when you are done buying things. Leave only those cards that you want to buy and will be able to buy next turn.

#### 6. END PHASE

In the End Phase, you draw a Fate card. When you are finished drawing, if the number of cards in your hand is above the maximum hand size of eight, discard cards from your hand until you are at the maximum hand size.

The turn ends when the End Phase does. It is customary to bow to the other player and say, "The table is yours." The other player now takes his or her turn.

#### WINNING THE GAME

There are four ways to win a game of L5R.

- **Military Victory:** Your opponent loses when his or her final province is destroyed.
- **Dishonor Victory:** Your opponent loses if his or her Family Honor is ever at or below -20.
- **Honor Victory:** You win if you start your turn on 40 Family Honor or higher, gaining victory by securing control of the Imperial Court.
- **Enlightenment Victory:** You win instantly if you control five Rings with five different element keywords (Air, Earth, Fire, Water and Void), each of which last entered play by its own text. You have won by being recognized as a mystically enlightened master.



## DECK CONSTRUCTION

All cards in this starter deck are legal for Samurai 40/40 format play, the main competitive format for L5R. This is shown by the Samurai Edition icon, or “bug”, at the lower left corner of the card. You can expand and change this deck by trading for or buying other cards, following these rules for a legal play deck in Samurai 40/40:

- The Dynasty and Fate decks must each have at least 40 cards.
- All cards in the play deck (including the Stronghold) must be Samurai legal.
- You can have no more than three copies of any card, by title, in your play deck.
- You can have no more than one copy of each Ring card, Event card, and Unique card, by title, in your decks. (Cards with the Experienced keyword are an exception; see Rules Glossary, “Experienced.”)

Cards from older editions of L5R that have been reprinted with a Samurai Edition “bug” may be included in Samurai format decks. However, in all L5R formats, cards are considered to have the stats and text of their most recent printing (MRP) in English. A number of cards reprinted in Samurai Edition have been changed from their previous version.

### TIPS ON DECK CONSTRUCTION

A good player will usually build decks not much bigger than the 40 card minimum, to improve the chances of seeing the best cards in the deck. In the Dynasty deck, try to include between 13 and 17 Holdings, and only a few Events and Regions. Most of the remaining cards should be Personalities aligned to your Clan that you can buy with your Stronghold or your Stronghold and a Holding. Feel free to include a few more expensive Personalities for mid-game muscle. Only include out-of-Clan personalities that are worth the higher amount you’ll pay for them.

The majority of your Fate deck should usually be cards that cost no Gold – Actions and Rings. Too many Attachments or Actions with a Gold Cost will clog your hand and interfere with your Dynasty development. You should only run Spells if you have six or more Shugenja Personalities in the deck. The same advice goes for other Fate cards that only work with a specific kind of Dynasty card.

## MULTIPLAYER RULES

You may have noticed that some of the rules and cards are worded to accommodate more than two players. From the start, L5R has been designed to support multiplayer enjoyment. Only three new things need to be learned to play a game with three or more players.

### TURN ORDER

The next turn in a multiplayer game passes to the player on the left, and this order is also followed in action rounds. All players must pass consecutively to end a multiplayer action round.

### ALLYING

In the Declaration Segment of an Attack Phase, first the Attacker, then the Defender, may invite any third-party players to ally immediately after the Attacker has designated another player as the Defender.

The first time each Attack Phase an invited player has any units on one side of a battlefield, he or she becomes the inviting player’s ally, and gains 2 Honor if he or she assigned those units. An ally can assign even if the inviting player has assigned no units to that battlefield.

An ally cannot assign or move units to the other player’s side, even if the other player also invited him or her.

In the Infantry Maneuvers Segment, after the Attacker’s opportunity to assign, each player in turn order who was invited by the Attacker may assign any of his or her unbowed units at home to the attacking side at any battlefields.

Then, after the Defender’s opportunity to assign, each player, in turn order, who was invited by the Defender (and not allied with the Attacker) may likewise assign to the defending side at any battlefields.

Follow this procedure for assigning allying Cavalry units in Cavalry Maneuvers, as well.

A player who was not invited by the Attacker or Defender cannot assign or move his or her units to that player’s side in that Attack Phase, but can still take actions in the battle if they are otherwise legal.

Defending allied units bow from battle resolution in the same way attacking units do.



## ELIMINATION

If a player loses, and two or more players are left, there is no victory, but the losing player leaves the game.

The losing player's Stronghold, the cards from his or her deck (even those controlled by other players), and any created cards he or she controls are all removed from the game. Cards from other players' decks that the losing player controls return to the control of their owners, or are discarded if they are attachments or Regions. Any of the losing player's remaining Provinces cease to exist.

Ongoing effects from his or her cards remain, and any of his or her created cards controlled by other players, or tokens still in play, remain (though different objects may be used to mark them.)



*Illus. Miguel Coimbra*

## RULES GLOSSARY

As you read the cards, you may notice a number of special terms being used. If a term is new to you, look it up in this Rules Glossary even if you think you know what it means; there may be special rules that apply to the term.

**ACTIVE PLAYER:** The player whose turn it is.

**ALLY:** A player in a multiplayer game's attack who is not the Attacker or Defender. See "Multiplayer Rules," p. 41.

**ARMOR:** A Personality can have only one **Armor** attached. See "Attachments," p. 17.

**ARMY:** One or more units on one side at a battlefield. However, when a side has no units, the term "army" does not restrict actions that move units there, create units there, or count the number of units there. See "Attack Phase," p. 33.

**ASSIGN:** To place units at a battlefield. Assigning is not movement. Only unbowed Personalities can assign. See "Attack Phase," p. 33.

**BASE:** Refers to a stat, keyword, or other game text as printed on the most recent printing of the card, without modification. If the card is a created card, "base" refers to the text it was created with.

**BATTLEFIELD:** See "Attack Phase," p. 33.

**BONUS:** A bonus to a stat is any effect that increases its value. See also "Penalty."

**CAN NOT:** "Can not" (or "cannot") in a card effect means that another effect is always negated under the circumstances given.

**CAVALRY:** A keyword representing a mobile military force, mounted or not. See "Attack Phase," p. 33.

**CHALLENGE:** A challenge is an effect that creates a duel between two Personalities (see "Duel"). One Personality will be the challenger, and the other will be the challenged. The Personalities in a challenge must be controlled by different players.

Some challenges say that they can be refused; if they do not say this, they cannot be refused. If the challenged Personality's player refuses, the duel doesn't happen, and he suffers the consequences described. Otherwise, the challenged player accepts, and the two Personalities enter a duel.



**CLAN ALIGNMENT:** A keyword ending in “Clan” that refers to one of the nine major Clans: Crab, Crane, Dragon, Lion, Mantis, Phoenix, Scorpion, Spider and Unicorn. Keywords such as “Hare Clan” do not give a Clan alignment even though they include the word “Clan.”

**CONSECUTIVE:** Refers to ranged attacks or other effects that are targeted and resolved one after the other.

**CONTROL:** You gain control of a card when you bring it into play, and normally keep control of it while it remains in play. There are two exceptions: an attachment is controlled by its Personality's controller, and a Region is controlled by its Province's owner.

Some effects may also change control of a card between players. When a player takes control of another player's card, it goes to the new player's home; this does not count as movement.

A card's text that addresses a player directly (such as “You may not play Terrains” or “Lose 5 Honor”) is meant to refer to its controller if it's in play, or its owner (see Owner) if it's not.

**COPY:** Some effects may copy a keyword, trait, stat, or ability from one card to another. If a stat is copied, set the copying card's stat to the current value of the copied card's stat. If a trait or ability is copied, all references to the source card's title in the original card's ability are changed to the new card's title. For example, if a Personality's ability says “Battle: Give Mitsu +3F” and a Personality named Nokatsu copies it, the copied text on Nokatsu reads “Battle: Give Nokatsu +3F.”

The new copy of an ability is a different ability from the original – for example, when copying an ability that has already been used that turn.

A copied ability or trait cannot itself copy an ability or trait. Also, a card cannot copy its own text or stats.

**COURTIER:** A keyword referring to someone trained in the politics and manners of the Imperial Court. Courtier Personalities can commit seppuku using a Reaction available to all players; see “Seppuku” for details.

**CREATED CARDS:** Some effects may *create* cards in addition to the cards included in decks. You may use pieces of paper, face-down spare cards, or other objects to keep track of these cards.

The stats and text a card is created with are its base values. If an effect that creates a card gives no value for a stat the card type normally has, that stat's base value is zero. Exception: Created Personalities have a “–” Honor Requirement.

Attachments and Regions you create will attach to a Personality or Province as part of their creation effect. Other cards you create enter play in your home under your control. When a created card leaves play, remove it from the game.

**DEAD:** When an effect destroys a Personality, he enters the discard pile in the *dead* state. Turn him 90 degrees to the right while in the discard pile to show this.

**DELAY:** Some effects may *delay* themselves or other effects, so that they do not happen at the time they resolve, but at some future time.

**DESTROY:** An effect that *destroys* a card puts it in the discard pile from play, and makes it dead if it is a Personality.

**DISCARD:** To put a card in its Dynasty or Fate discard pile. When “discard a card” appears alone, it means “discard a Fate card from your hand.”

**DISCARDED:** The state of a card in a discard pile that is not dead.

**DISHONOR:** Some things can *dishonor* a Personality, disgracing him or her in the eyes of Rokugani society. Turn the Personality 180 degrees upside down to show this *dishonorable* state.

A dishonorable Personality's Personal Honor is always zero. After a Personality is destroyed while dishonorable, the player who last controlled him or her loses Honor equal to the Personality's base Personal Honor. A destroyed dishonorable Personality remains dishonorably dead even in the discard pile. Turn the dishonorably dead Personality 90 degrees to the left rather than right to show this.

When dishonorable Personalities are involved in gaining one or more points of Honor, the Honor gain is negated and they are rehonored (restored to honorable status). Specifically, this happens:

- Before a player gains Honor from an action or trait that targeted, came from, or was performed by one or more of his or her dishonorable Personalities.
- Before a player gains Honor from attaching a card to one of his or her dishonorable Personalities.
- Before a player with one or more dishonorable Personalities in his or her army gains Honor from allying with that army (see multiplayer rules, p. 41) or from destroying opposing cards in battle resolution. In a tied battle, all dishonored Personalities in an army are rehonored before being destroyed, and their army's leader gains no Honor.



**DRAW:** To put the top card of your Fate deck into your hand.

**DUEL:** A *duel* is a confrontation that comes from a challenge between two Personalities. The Personalities in a duel must be controlled by different players. Follow these steps in a duel:

1. After Personalities enter a duel, each of their players puts his or her hand aside and takes the top three cards of the Fate deck to form a *focus pool*. Like the hand, the focus pool is face-down but visible to its player. Cards cannot be played as normal from the focus pool; they are focused instead.
2. The challenged player has the first option to *focus* or *strike*. To focus, a player chooses a card from his or her focus pool and puts it face-down. If the player focused, the other player then has the option to focus or strike. The players continue to take turns focusing until one of them strikes. A player who can't focus must strike.

Each player may focus one card per duel from his or her hand instead of focus pool.

3. After a strike is called but before duel resolution, all focused cards are turned face-up. Any traits on focused cards with the special boldface trigger "**Focus Effect:**" are resolved, in an order chosen by the active player. Ignore anything on focused cards that doesn't specifically apply to the card's use as a focus in a duel.
4. In duel resolution, each player totals the Focus Values of his or her focused cards, and adds this to his or her Personality's *duel stat*. The duel stat is Chi unless another stat is given (for example, a "duel of Personal Honor"). The higher total wins the duel, and the lower total loses. The duel effect may give consequences for the loser or winner.

If the two totals are equal, the duel is a tie; both players lose and take the loser's consequences.

5. After duel resolution, discard all focused cards and end all changes to their Focus Value. Then, each player puts any cards still in his focus pool on the bottom of his or her deck, in any order. The duel ends.

**DUELIST:** A Personality with the **Duelist** keyword is a specialist in single combat. Immediately before the first opportunity to focus or strike in a duel, if a Duelist is the challenger, and the challenged is a non-Duelist with an equal or higher duel stat, the Duelist gains the first opportunity to focus. The Duelist must use this opportunity to focus instead of strike, if possible.

**ELEMENT KEYWORD:** One of the five keywords for the mystic elements of Rokugan: **Air, Earth, Fire, Water, and Void.**

**ENEMY:** Referring to the opposite side in a battle. See "Attack Phase," p. 33.

**ENGAGE:** The point in time when a battle begins. See "Attack Phase," p. 33.

**ENTERING-PLAY:** An entering-play effect is one that is triggered by its card entering play from an out-of-play area. See also Special Circumstances, "Traits," p. 54.

**EXCHANGE:** When an effect exchanges two stats, note their current values. Then, simultaneously set each stat to the noted value of the other one.

**EXPENSIVE:** A card with a higher Gold Cost than another is more expensive.

**EXPERIENCED:** In the story of L5R, characters grow and develop. To reflect this, some Personality cards have the **Experienced** keyword.

The Experienced keyword may be accompanied by a number that represents the Personality's experience level, and rarely by an alternate title that represents a former name of the Personality; for example "Experienced 3 Daidoji Reikai." Nevertheless, the term "Experienced" refers to any keyword that contains "Experienced."

A Personality with "Experienced" and no number has experience level of one. A Personality without the Experienced keyword is non-Experienced, and has experience level zero.

Any number of single Personalities with the same title but different experience levels may be included in a deck, even if they are Unique, and even if this puts more than three cards with the same title in your deck. For example, you could have three copies of non-Experienced Hida Daizu, plus one copy of Experienced Hida Daizu, plus one copy of Experienced 2 Hida Daizu.

During the Dynasty Phase, you may bring an Experienced Personality card into play, or you may overlay it onto one of your Personalities with the same title (including alternate titles) but lower experience level. You can not overlay with a Unique Personality if a Unique version of that Personality is in play, unless it's the one being overlaid.

When you overlay, you do not need to meet Honor Requirements, but you do need to meet other requirements and restrictions (including "Loyal").

You do not have to pay Gold costs unless the overlaying Personality is two or more experience levels above the overlaid Personality, and more expensive than the overlaid Personality. In that case you pay the difference between the overlaying and overlaid Personalities' Gold costs.

An overlaying card is stacked on top of its less experienced version without entering play.



This stack is treated as one card until it leaves play, at which point all cards in the stack except the topmost are removed from the game. The stacked card has all the text and stats of the overlaying card, and while overlaying, inherits the base abilities (but not traits, keywords, or stats) of any underlying cards. The stacked card inherits all states, ongoing effects, attachments, and tokens of the underlying card.

Experienced cards that are not Personalities follow the Experienced deck construction rules, but do not overlay.

**FACE-DOWN:** All cards in your decks and your hand, and some cards in your Provinces, are normally face-down. Cards become face-down when they enter a deck or a hand.

**FOCUS, FOCUS POOL, FOCUS EFFECT:** Terms used in dueling. See “Duel.”

**“FOR”:** Effects are granted “for” other effects or outcomes if they depend on the other effect or outcome happening. For example, an Honor Gain “for” a Personality entering play is one that depends on the Personality entering play. The honor gain in “Bring him into play. Gain 2 Honor.” is not an Honor gain for entering play because the two effects are separate, but the honor gain in “After this card enters play: Gain 2 Honor” is, because it doesn’t happen if the card doesn’t enter play.

**“FROM”:** Some things check to see if other effects, actions, or targeting come “from” a given source. The source is the card that the effect, action or targeting is printed on, or the rulebook if it is printed there. There are three exceptions:

- Targeting and destruction by Ranged Attacks come from the card that created the Ranged Attack, not the rulebook.
- A Personality’s destruction for having zero Chi comes from the effect that last gave the Personality a Chi penalty, or from the rulebook if there was no such effect.
- Effects of traits and abilities given to other cards, copied from other cards, or on created cards, come from the card they are currently on.

**HOME:** The location in front of a player’s Provinces where cards normally enter play. When “home” describes a unit’s location (for example, “a unit at home” or “move the Personality home”) it normally refers to the unit’s controller’s home.

**HONORABLE:** A Personality not in the dishonorable state. “Honorably dead” refers to such a Personality who is dead. See “Dishonor.”

**HUMAN:** This term refers to a Personality or Follower who does not have the Nonhuman keyword. It is not itself a keyword. See “Nonhuman.”

**INFANTRY:** This term refers to a Personality or Follower who does not have the Cavalry keyword. It is not itself a keyword.

**LEADER:** The Attacker or Defender in a battle, as opposed to any third-party players who are allies. The leader of your side is the friendly leader; the leader of the opposing side is the enemy leader.

**LOCATION:** An area holding cards in play. Battlefields and each player’s home are locations.

**LOOK:** Inspect a face-down card without showing it to anyone else or changing its position (for example, in a deck).

**LOYAL:** A Personality with the Loyal keyword cannot be controlled by a player who does not share a Clan alignment with the Personality.

**MAXIMUM/MINIMUM:** Some effects may give a maximum or minimum value to a stat, which is applied after any other modifiers to the stat. See “Stats,” p. 21.

**MAY REMAIN BOWED:** This trait means that while the card is bowed, its controller may negate any effect that straightens the card, until the card straightens or leaves play.

**MOVE:** To change the position of a unit from one location to another. Assigning and returning home after battle are not considered movement. Effects that move a unit to a battlefield always move it into its controller’s side there.

**NAVAL:** The Naval keyword allows you to take the following action available to all players:

**Reaction:** If you are the Attacker and your current army has more Naval cards than the opposing side, once per battle after engaging: You have the first opportunity to take a Battle action, which must be performed by a target Naval Personality or one of his Naval Followers.

**NEGATIVE VALUES, STATS:** See “Stats,” p. 21.

**“NON-” AND “UN-”:** These prefixes simply mean something that does not have a given type, piece of text, or state. For example, a “non-Personality” card is any card that is not a Personality; and an “unopposed” card is any card that is not in the opposed state, even one that could not be opposed because it’s not at a battlefield. Exception: “Nonhuman,” “Unaligned” and “Undead” are keywords with a special meaning that do not follow this rule.



**NONHUMAN:** This is a special keyword showing that a Personality or Follower is not human.

**OPPOSED:** A card, side, or army is *opposed* at a battlefield if there are one or more units in the enemy army. See “Attack Phase,” p. 33.

**OPPOSING:** For a card to be opposing another card, they must be at the same battlefield, on different sides. See “Attack Phase,” p. 33.

**OVERLAY:** See “Experienced.”

**OWN:** You own all cards that were originally in your deck and that you brought into play from outside the game, including cards you created. Cards you own can never go into another player's decks or discard piles; they always go to yours instead.

**PAYING:** Effects that change a Gold cost using the word “paying” (for example, “paying 2 less Gold”) last only for that payment, not until the end of the turn.

**PENALTY:** Any effect that reduces the value of a stat.

**PERFORM:** A Personality or Follower is performing an action if its controller is the player taking the action, and any of these things is true:

- The action comes from an ability on the Personality or Follower.
- The action comes from an ability on an Item or Spell in the Personality's unit.
- The Personality or Follower was targeted in the ability's constraints block (between the two colons).

**PERMANENT:** A *permanent* effect refers to an ongoing effect with a duration that lasts until the end of the game. Permanent effects can still be negated and changed by other effects.

**PLAY:** To put a card into play, or to use an action card. “In play” means located in a player's home, or at a battlefield.

**RANGED ATTACK:** A Ranged Attack represents a military effect that destroys at a distance, such as archers' arrows or a magical fiery bolt. “Ranged X Attack,” where X stands for a number, is shorthand for the text “Target a Follower or a Personality without Followers in the current enemy army. If its Force is equal to or less than X, destroy it.” The targeting in a Ranged Attack is required targeting.

**REHONOR:** See “Dishonor.”

**REMOVE FROM THE GAME:** When a card is removed from the game, set it aside. It exists outside all areas of the game, and cannot normally return.

**RESOLVE:** To apply effects of an action, trait or Event; also, to determine the winner of a duel or battle. An action begins to resolve after its costs have been paid. It stops resolving when the last effect (apart from delayed effects) has been applied. If costs or other requirements of a legally announced action are interfered with so that its effects never happen, the action does not resolve; it only ends. See “Action Phase,” p. 28.

**REVEAL:** To turn a face-down card face-up.

**SAMURAI:** An elite warrior trained according to the noble code of Bushido (or the self-serving code of Shourido in the case of Spider Clan Samurai). Samurai Personalities can commit seppuku using a Reaction available to all players; see “Seppuku” for details.

**SEARCH:** To look through a deck or other area for a card of a specified kind. After you search a deck, you must reshuffle it after you take any card(s) you searched for. If you fail to find a legal card, you cannot search for that kind of card again in the same game.

**SEPPUKU:** An act of ritual suicide. If an effect directs a Personality to commit seppuku, apply the following effects: “Rehonor the Personality, then destroy him; these effects cannot be negated.”

Additionally, all players have the ability:

**Reaction:** Any number of times per turn, before you lose Honor from an action that targeted or was performed by one of your Courtier or Samurai Personalities: He commits seppuku. Reduce the Honor loss to one.

**SET:** When a stat is set to a particular value, give it a bonus or penalty such that it reaches that value.

**SHOW:** To display the face of a face-down card to all other players, then return it to its face-down state. Compare with “look” and “reveal.”

**SHUGENJA:** A person trained in the magic of Rokugan. Only Shugenja Personalities can attach Spell cards.

**SIDE:** An area of the battlefield belonging to either the Attacker or the Defender.

**SIMULTANEOUS:** Refers to Ranged Attacks or other multiple effects that are all targeted at the same time and then resolved at the same time.



**SINGULAR:** A player cannot bring into play or otherwise take control of a Singular card if he or she already controls a Singular card with the same title.

**STAT:** A numerical value on a card or Province, such as Force, Gold Cost or Province Strength. See “Reading the Cards,” p. 21.

**SUCCESSFUL:** An action or effect is successful if it caused any changes in the game state.

**SWITCH:** When an effect switches the locations of two units, each one simultaneously moves to the location of the other. If one movement is negated, the other one is also negated.

**TACTICAL, TACTICIAN:** An action with the **Tactical** keyword can only be performed by a Tactician Personality (see *Perform*). A Tactical action that is not performed by any card can only be taken if one of your unbowed Tacticians is at the current battlefield. Each Tactician can only perform one Tactical action per turn.

All players can take the following Tactical Battle Action. Keep in mind that, due to the above rule, it can only target each individual Tactician once per turn:

**Tactical Battle:** Any number of times per turn, discard a card and target one of your Tactician Personalities: Give him a Force bonus equal to the Focus Value of the discarded card.

**TERRAIN:** A Battle action with the Terrain keyword represents the ground on which a battle is fought. Terrains follow special rules.

- Terrains are played as a Battle action. After a Terrain’s costs (if any) are paid, its card enters play at the current battlefield, and its effects resolve; do not discard it. A Terrain is not on either side, but it is at the battlefield, and can be destroyed.
- A Terrain action cannot be played if a Terrain is already in play at the current battlefield.
- When a Terrain leaves play, its effects with a duration end, and any of its delayed effects will not happen.
- After battle resolution, discard any Terrains in play at that battlefield.

**TOKEN:** A marker that is placed on a card or game area. You may use beads, pieces of paper, or other common objects as tokens. Tokens may have a keyword (such as Corruption). They may also give a stat bonus or penalty (such as -1C) to whatever they are

on. This bonus or penalty is considered to come from the last effect that placed the token on the card or area.

Tokens are not cards. They are removed from the game if the card they are on leaves play.

**TRANSFER:** To move an attached card from one Personality or Province to another. You do not need to pay the costs of the transferred card because it is not entering play. You still need to meet restrictions on the new attachment when you transfer.

**TURN:** When “turn” refers to part of a particular player’s turn (for example, in “the end of his Straighten Phase two turns from now”) what is meant is “two of *the player’s* turns from now.”

**UNALIGNED:** A Personality, player, or Stronghold without a Clan alignment. Unaligned Personalities do not have the same Clan alignment as an Unaligned player or Stronghold.

**UNIQUE:** A player cannot bring into play a *Unique* card if any player already controls a Unique card with the same title (but see “Experienced,” p. 47). This keyword also restricts deck construction. See “Deck Construction,” p. 40.

**VARIABLE:** A stat or other numerical value whose amount depends on other things in the game; usually indicated by an asterisk (\*) on the printed card. For example, if a card has the trait “This card’s Force equals the number of Holdings in play,” its Force stat is variable.

**WAIVE:** When a cost is waived, it is no longer a cost of whatever you were paying for.

**WEAPON:** A Personality can have only one Weapon attached. See “Attachments,” p. 17.

#### YOUR:

- When “your” and other possessive forms such as “the player’s” or “his” refer to a card, this means “controlled by that player, or owned by that player if the card is not in play.”
- When “your” and similar words refer to an effect, action, or targeting, they refer to effects, actions and targeting from that player’s cards. See “From.”



## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The following rules cover fine points and infrequent situations in the game.

### STATS:

To calculate a stat's value at any given time, do steps 1 through 3 below:

1. Apply all bonuses and penalties.
2. If the total is below 0, treat it as 0 unless the stat can have negative values.
3. If the total is less than a minimum value or more than a maximum value, treat it as the minimum or maximum. Whenever a bonus, penalty, minimum, or maximum begins or ends, recalculate the stat.

### Example:

A Samurai with 1 base Force is in play when an Event resolves that says "All Samurai have -2 Force." This gives him a -2F penalty, making his Force 0 (1 base Force minus 2F from the Event = -1, which is treated as 0). Later that turn, a player takes an action that gives the Samurai +3F. His Force is recalculated again with the bonus and the penalty, making his Force 2 (1F, minus 2F from the event, plus 3F from the action).

**TEXT BOX:** Some actions and traits may contain *reminder text*: italic text in parentheses (*like this*). Reminder text is there to clarify a rules point that may not be obvious reading the card. For example, an effect that asks you to put an attachment in play may have the reminder text "(*paying all costs*)" which refers to the rules about attachments entering play (p. 32). The reminder text should not be taken to mean that the rule doesn't normally apply or that the paying of costs is an effect of the card.

**KEYWORDS:** Keywords of actions on Action cards also apply to the card itself; so, an Action card with a Fire action is also a Fire card.

**TRAITS:** Two common kinds of traits have unwritten triggers in order to save space on the card:

- If a trait produces Gold, it will sometimes just be worded like "Bow this card: Produce 3 Gold." The unwritten trigger for this effect is "When you are producing Gold." Gold production from traits is always optional.
- If a trait makes you lose or gain Honor when its card enters play, it will sometimes just be worded like "Lose 4 Honor." The unwritten trigger for this effect is "After this card enters play."

**PROVINCES:** Some effects may turn cards face-up in your Provinces outside the Events Phase. However, Events only resolve, and Regions only enter play, during their player's own Events Phase.

If your Dynasty Deck runs out of cards, your Provinces still exist; use markers in place of cards. Likewise, there is no negative effect if your Fate deck runs out, other than having no more Fate cards to draw.

**GOOD FAITH RULE:** To legally announce an action or play a card, you must first be able to do it in "good faith"; that is, its requirements must be met, you must be able to pay its costs, and you must be able to meet any required targets in an action's targeting step. For actions that attach a card, you must be able to pay the card's modified costs and attach it legally.

Sometimes, an action may be announced legally, but something interferes with the required targeting or costs. The player may then find alternate required targets or an alternate way to pay costs. If he or she doesn't, the action doesn't resolve. The ability it came from is considered used, and any action card it came from is discarded.

If something interferes with the costs or requirements to bring a card into play, and its player can't or won't meet them, the card is discarded.

**BLIND CARDS RULE:** When a rule or card text needs to know what an action does or will do, it only takes into account the current text of the action. It does not consider any ongoing or triggered effects that change or negate the action's own effects.

For example, if an ongoing effect says "Units can not move to battlefields," you can still use the exception to the Rule of Presence (p. 35) to take an action whose effects, by text, would normally move your unit to a current battlefield where you have no units.

**TRACKING RULE:** It is impossible to track effects on different face-down cards mixed together. All "memory" on individual cards (including ongoing effects on that card, Dishonorable status, and whether an ability has been used) end when the card enters a deck, a hand, or another area where it's both face-down and out of play.

**ABILITIES:** If a card has an ability that can be used from out of play, you can only use that ability if you own the card.

**RESTRICTIONS:** Restrictions on entering play are only checked when a card enters play. For example, if a Personality's Personal Honor is reduced to 0, and he has a Follower with an Honor Requirement of 1, nothing special happens.



**REACTIONS:** Even if a Reaction says it can be taken any number of times per turn, it can still only be taken once to any single trigger. The same applies to triggered traits.

**TIMING CONFLICTS:** If things are triggered at the same time and their order needs to be determined, the active player decides their order. Exception: Reactions to a given trigger occur after triggered traits and delayed effects that are keyed to that trigger, and follow an action round (See “Action Phase,” p. 28).

### MORE QUESTIONS?

If a question arises that these rules cannot answer, many more fine points of the rules are laid out in the online *Comprehensive Rules* document. This technical document is meant for the use of advanced players, tournament judges, and rules officials.

Our online Comprehensive Rules cover every aspect of the L5R game rules in greater depth than this rulebook can, and also serve as our archive for official rulings on individual cards. The Comprehensive Rules are easily searchable and are updated weekly.

Players, judges, and organizers alike can download the Comprehensive Rules from

<http://rules.l5r.com>

If you have a question that isn't covered in the Comprehensive Rules, visit the L5R CCG Rules area in our forums at

<http://www.alderac.com/forum>

If a quick search there does not yield an answer, our official rules gurus will review and answer your questions as quickly as possible.

Please follow our forum rules when posting, so as to ensure a timely response.