

# OVERVIEW

Dark Dealings is a game of bluffing, negotiation, and hidden agendas. Each round, players will choose to influence one of three areas: Politics, Military, or Economy. Your influence alone will not be enough to succeed, so you must discuss and strike bargains to advance your position. But only one player will be victorious...and while cooperation is crucial, deception is also a powerful tool. Who amongst you will emerge from the darkness to seize control of the realm?

# соптептѕ



90 Influence Cards (15 per Character)



18 Strength Tokens (3 per Character)



45 Scoring Cards





Vault

# ~ READ THIS FIRST! ~

This game will present you with many opportunities to discuss, negotiate, and even betray your fellow players. Most of the time, whether you tell the truth is up to you. Regardless, we encourage you to embrace the spirit of dealing and communicate often as you play!



- Separate the Scoring cards by their backs into three decks: Political, Military, and Economic. Shuffle each deck, then place them face down in the center of the play area.
- Each player chooses a character, taking that character's 15 Influence cards and three Strength tokens. Return the cards and tokens for unused characters to the game box.
- Shuffle your own Influence cards and place them face down in front of you. Then draw four cards into your hand. Keep your hand secret from the other players.
- Give the Vault and the Crown token to the oldest player.

# PLAYING THE GAME

The number of rounds in the game depends on the number of players:

3 Players: Nine rounds (three per player)

5 Players: Five rounds (one per player)

4 Players: Eight rounds (two per player)

6 Players: Six rounds (one per player)

Each round consists of three steps that the players must perform in order:

- I. DECLARE STRENGTH
- 2. Place İnfluence
- 3. REVEAL AND SCORE

#### I. DECLARE STRENGTH

To Declare Strength, find the card in your hand with the highest Influence number, located in the top left. (If a card has a number anywhere else, ignore it for now.) If several cards are tied for highest, choose any one of them. Keep this card in your hand without showing it to the other players.

**NOTE:** Learning about other players' strongest cards helps you plan for later steps, when you will each choose a card to attempt to score points.

Influence cards also have one of three suits written directly below the Influence number: Political, Military, or Economic. (Ignore suits written elsewhere for now.) Check which suit your highest card is and find your Strength token matching that suit. Place the token in front of you face down.

Once all players have placed their Strength tokens face down, reveal them at the same time.

Important: You cannot lie when placing your Strength token. There are many chances to lie in this game, but this is not one of them!



## 2. Place İnfluence

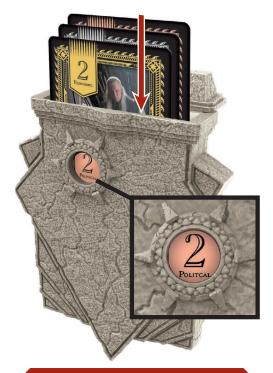
The player with the Crown token starts by choosing any one Influence card from their hand and placing it secretly into the Vault. The card's Influence number and suit must be visible to them through the window of the Vault. Do not show the window to anyone else just yet.

Next, the Crown player **announces out loud** the suit of the card they placed in the Vault. This announcement may be true or a lie—you decide!

The Crown player then closes the Vault and passes it to **any other player**. Pass the Vault with the window down. When you receive the Vault, you may secretly look at the window.

Now the player who received the Vault repeats this process, secretly placing a card from their own hand in and announcing its suit (truthfully or not). Their card may be placed either behind or in front of the Crown player's card. They then pass the Vault to any other player who has not yet placed a card.

Keep passing the Vault and placing cards until each player has placed one, then return it to the Crown player.



#### **HONESTY OR DECEIT?**

All players may talk freely during this step! Here are examples of things you might say:

- Does your Strength token match the card you placed in the Vault?
- If you place a Political card this round, I will also.
- What card did you see when the Vault was passed to you?
- Did you place your card in the front or the back?

You may respond as truthfully as you like! Deals between players are not binding.

## 3. Reveal and Score

After all players have placed a card in the Vault, the Crown player opens it and removes the cards inside. Sort these cards face up by suit and add up the Influence numbers for each suit. (Note that some cards have special effects that may change Influence.)

The suit with the highest total Influence is the strongest for this round. If several are tied, the Crown player breaks the tie.

Now, only the players that placed a card of the strongest suit will score points. If your card was not in the strongest suit, you do not score this round.

## Exception: If all cards in the Vault are the same suit, only the Crown player will score!

To score points, find the deck of Scoring cards in the center that matches the strongest suit. Each scoring player draws one card from this deck. You may look at your Scoring cards at any time, but keep them secret from the other players.

Scoring cards are worth 2, 3, or 4 points each. However, at the end of the game, you may only count the full points for your highest Scoring card of each suit. Additional cards in that suit are worth one point each, regardless of their written value. (See Game End on page 8 for more details.)

#### REVEAL AND SCORE EXAMPLE



Economic: 3 Influence



Military: 4 Influence



Political: 5 Influence

The Influence totals for this round are 5 Political (2+3), 4 Military (1+1+2), and 3 Economic. This means Political is the strongest suit. Since Corlys and Rhaenyra played Political cards, they each draw one Scoring card from the Political deck. No other players score points this round.

#### End of Round

- # Discard all cards that were placed in the Vault this round.
- # Each player draws one of their Influence cards to refill their hand.
- # The player with the Crown passes it and the Vault to the player on their left.
- # Begin the next round by returning to Step 1. Declare Strength.

## Character Influence Cards

Each character has three unique Influence cards, known as Character cards. In addition to the Influence number and suit, each Character card has a special effect that can change the course of a round. If a card's effect ever conflicts with these instructions, the card takes precedence.

#### Deceit Influence Cards

Each character also has three Deceit cards, which can be used to mislead your opponents. Deceit cards show two different suits: one in the top left, and another at the bottom. When you Declare Strength, use only the top number and suit. When you Reveal and Score, use the bottom number and suit instead.



Character Influence Cards



Deceit Influence Cards



Scoring Cards

# GAME END

After a certain number of rounds (see Playing the Game on page 4), the game ends. Players then reveal the Scoring cards they collected during the game. Each player scores the points shown on their single highest Scoring card in each suit (Political, Military, and Economic). If you have more than one Scoring card in a suit, each additional card is worth 1 point, no matter what is written on the card.

The player with the most points is the winner! In the case of a tie, the tied player with more total Scoring cards wins. If there is still a tie, the tied players share control of the realm.

#### END OF GAME SCORING







Economic: 5 Points







Political: 5 Points

Military: 3 Points

Daemon scores 5 points for his Economic Scoring cards: 3 points for the highest card, and 1 point for each additional card (ignoring their written values). He also scores 5 points for his Political cards (4+1) and 3 points for Military. Daemon's final score is 13 points.







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This game was designed by the fire-breathing team at Prospero Hall.