

# STYX

**THE THRONE OF THE UNDERWORLD STANDS EMPTY.  
THE SUPREME POSITION IS YOURS FOR THE TAKING!**

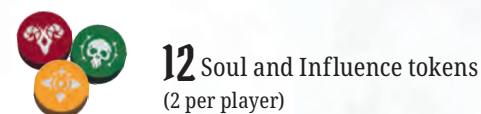
The realms cannot remain ungoverned. From the depths of the Abyss to the banks of the River Styx, the tribes send their emissaries to choose a new ruler from the hungry throng of hopefuls. To win this war of influence, one of them must master the elements and bring to heel the Horsemen of the Apocalypse. This must be done with haste, however, for Chaos waits for neither man nor god...

## ◀ RULES ▶

### OVERVIEW

Each player takes on the role of an overlord vying for the Throne of the Underworld. A game of STYX is divided into turns called **Audiences**. During each **Audience**, 2 **Emissaries** from the Tribes of the Underworld are sent forth to pledge their allegiance to the Throne. Each player secretly chooses a token determining their chosen course of action toward the **Emissaries**. Depending on the players' choices, they may gain the allegiance of the tribe, influence, gold, and the Elements they need to win the race to the Throne. They may also choose to betray the **Emissaries**, slaying them in order to harvest their souls and slow their competition down.

### GAME COMPONENTS






## GOAL OF THE GAME

To claim victory and become the ruler of the Underworld, you will have to build an army that meets one of the following 4 victory conditions (see “Victory Conditions”, page 9) :

-  Reach 20 points on the game board's Influence track.
 
- OR
-  Have the strongest army if Chaos  reaches 21 Influence before the players reach space 20.
 
- OR
-  Gather all 4 Elements     and one complete Soul .
 
- OR
-  Assemble 2 of the 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse.
 

## SETUP

- 1 Each player selects a **Standard-Bearer** card and takes the set of matching-colored tokens:

- 1 **Influence** token, to be placed on the space numbered 1 on the **Influence** track.
- 1 **Soul** token, to be placed on the starting space of the **Soul** track.
- 3 **Action** tokens (**Tithe** , **Muster** , and **Eliminate** ) to be placed near their **Standard-Bearer**.
- 1 **Player Aid** card.



- 2 Each player starts with 4 coins, the rest are set aside to form the reserve. Unused **Standard-Bearers** are put back in the box.

### Preparing the draw pile:

- Remove the **Shamanic Totem** card from the deck and put it aside for now.
- Sort the deck according to the number of players, using the symbols at the bottom of the cards:

2 players – only use cards with the 2+  icon.

3 players – remove cards with the 4+  and 5+  icons and put them back in the box.

4 players – remove cards with the 5+  icon and put them back in the box.

5 or 6 players – use all the cards.

- 3 Shuffle the cards in play face down to form the **Emissary** draw pile. Reveal the top 2 cards from the pile and place them face up on the board, ready for the first **Audience**.

- 4 The eldest player takes the **First Player** token and will play first. At the end of each **Audience**, pass the token to the player to the current **First Player**'s left.

◆ You are now ready to start playing STYX! ◆



# EXAMPLE GAME SETUP FOR 4 PLAYERS



# EMISSARY CARD LAYOUT



**1** **Element(s)** the card provides you if the card is face-up in your army.



Water



Fire



Earth



Air

These icons provide you **both** of the displayed Elements:



These icons provide you **1** of the 2 displayed Elements of your choosing:



The icon is a wild card that can be substituted for Water , Fire , Earth , or Air as needed.

**2** **Name** of the card.

**3** Portion of a **Soul** claimed if the card is **Eliminated** .



**4** **Income** the card provides during a **Tithe** .



**5** This number represents both the **Influence** and the **Strength** of the card.



**Influence** : The number of spaces on the **Influence** track that the player's token moves forward when the card joins their army.



**Strength**: The power of the card when used for an **Elimination** .

**2 Strength** when discarded during an **Elimination** .



**6** Some cards have a **special ability**.


**7** **Number of players** icon.



## ACTION TOKENS


Action tokens allow you to choose how you wish to interact with one of the available cards during an **Audience** (a game turn). They must be placed face down on the target card in turn order.



**Tithe token** : Place on one of the **Audience** cards to try to gain the card's coin value, in addition to the income from your army's cards and, if you have obtained it, the amount granted by a **Bonus Income** token (see below).


*Exemple : The Tithing player gains 1 coin from the Audience card as well as 1 + 0 + 1 - 1 from their army, for a total of 2 coins.*



**Muster token** : Place on one of the Audience cards to try to add that card to your army. If more than one player places this token on the same card, they bid on the card with their available coins in turn order.

**Note:** Some cards have a **Muster**   special ability. These abilities are always optional, and are resolved at the end of the Audience when that Emissary is Mustered (see pages 7 and 10).








**Elimination token** : Place on one of the Audience cards to attempt to Eliminate the target and advance on the Soul track or impede your adversaries' progress! If more than one player places their Elimination token on the same card, they bid on the card in turn order by wagering one or more of their army cards' available Strength.

## THE SOUL TRACK


Obtain a **Bonus Income** token when you reach or pass these spaces.



Eliminating  a card with a Soul  icon allows you to advance on the Soul track a number of steps according to its value .

If your token reaches or passes the 1/4 Soul  mark, you obtain a **Bonus Income** token and place it with the "+ 1" side facing up. Flip it to the "+ 2" side if your token reaches or passes the 3/4 Soul  mark.



You do not need to stop on each space of the Soul track. If you eliminate a  card, for instance, immediately move your Soul token forward 2 spaces!

## AUDIENCE PROCEEDINGS (GAME TURN)







### Place Action tokens face down

Each player, starting with the **First Player** and proceeding in turn order, chooses the card they wish to interact with and places their chosen token on it, face down (see previous page).





### Reveal Action tokens in turn order

Action tokens are revealed in turn order.




**If an Elimination**  **was declared:** When the token is revealed, the player states the **Strength** they wish to commit to the **Elimination**  effort and cannot change this amount later in the turn. They may also choose to give up on the battle and **Elimination**  attempt by skipping their turn. Any other player who reveals an **Elimination**  token must commit at least 1 additional **Strength** to the **Elimination**  attempt than previous bids or give up on the battle and **Elimination**  attempt by skipping their turn. *Warning: Player cards are public knowledge. Each player bids once and only once. They cannot bid a higher amount later in the turn.*



**If a Muster**  **was declared:** When the token is revealed, the player states the number of coins (1  minimum) they wish to commit to the Muster effort and cannot change this amount later in the turn. They may also choose to give up on the Muster attempt by skipping their turn. Any other player who reveals a Muster  token must commit at least 1 additional  to the Muster attempt than previous bids or give up on the attempt by skipping their turn.




*Warning: Player treasures are public knowledge. Each player bids once and only once. They cannot bid a higher amount later in the turn.*









**If a Tithe**  **was declared:** The player does not need to do anything special. They simply turn their token face up on their turn.




### Resolving Actions



Players must wait for all tokens to be revealed before finalizing their actions, since opponents' actions may have an effect on the Audience's outcome.

**If an Elimination**  **was declared:** The player who won the **Elimination**  bidding discards one (or more) card(s) that meet the total winning **Strength** amount. If the target card is **Legendary** , the **Strength** bid must be equal to or greater than the card's **Strength** (see opposite page →).



An **Eliminated**  card (if it does not have the **Eternal**  icon) is placed in the center discard area and the **Chaos**  token moves forward a number of spaces equal to the card's **Strength**  5. If the **Eliminated**  card had a **Soul**  icon, the player moves their token forward on the Soul track the number of steps indicated.

An **Eliminated**  **Eternal**  card is not placed in the center discard area. Do not advance the **Chaos**  token. Instead, place the card back in the draw pile and shuffle it.

The card or cards used for the **Elimination**  are discarded and placed in the player's personal discard area. These cards do not cause the **Chaos**  token to advance.



*Important: Players do not claim the Soul values of cards bid and discarded to pay for an Elimination* .



**Eliminations** ✂ always take priority over other actions. An Eliminated card cannot be Mustered 🏳 or help with a Tithe 🏴. Any players performing a Tithe 🏴 who targeted an Eliminated ✂ card only gain the gold from their army cards.



**If a Muster was declared** 🏳: The player who won the gold bidding places their bid coins back into the reserve, adds the card to their army area, and advances their token the number of spaces on the Influence track shown on the card 5. Some cards have a Muster 🏳 effect. These effects 6 are optional, but if you wish to apply them, you must do so at the end of the Audience that you acquired the card.

**If a Tithe was declared** 🏴: The player gains the Tithed 🏴 coins from the reserve.

*Important: A Tithe 🏴 can never be lower than 1 coin. If the Tithe 🏴 is zero or less, the player still gains 1 coin regardless of modifiers.*

**If an Audience card is neither Mustered** 🏳 **nor Eliminated** ✂: Place the card in the central discard area and move the Chaos ⚙ token forward on the Influence track a number of spaces equal to the card's Strength 5. Eternal 🔄 cards, on the other hand, are placed back in the draw pile, which is then shuffled, and the Chaos ⚙ token does not advance.

## Preparing the next Audience

The player with the First Player token hands it to the player on their left. 2 cards are drawn from the draw pile and placed on the game board.

Note: Summon effects (see page 10) are resolved before the next Audience is drawn. This means that the First Player token may change hands before the next Audience takes place. The First Player token then passes to the player to the left of its new position.

## Legendary and Eternal card particularities



### Legendary 🏴 Cards

Most cards can be Eliminated ✂ by discarding a Strength 1 card from a player's army.

Legendary 🏴 cards, however, require a Strength equal to or greater than their Strength value in order to Eliminate ✂ them. At the end of the game, they can also break ties between players (see "Victory Conditions" on page 9).



### Eternal 🔄 Cards

Eternal 🔄 cards cannot be bid for Eliminations nor do they count for victory against Chaos ⚙ if its token reaches 21 Influence points before the players do (see page 9). If an Eternal 🔄 card is not Mustered 🏳 at the end of an Audience and hasn't been Eliminated ✂ during the Audience, do not advance the Chaos ⚙ token. Instead, place the card back in the draw pile then shuffle it. There is no Soul to be gained from Eternal 🔄 cards!



Note: The Headless Horseman card belongs to both categories.

## ACTION RESOLUTION EXAMPLE



### Left Card

- Blue** shows their Muster token first and announces a bid of 3 coins.
- Yellow** reveals their Tithe token.
- Green** also reveals a Muster token and chooses to increase the bid to 4 coins.

### As a result:

- Blue** keeps their 3 coins, but will not gain control of the card at the end of the Audience.
- Yellow** gains 3 coins (2 coins from their army, plus an additional 1 coin from the targeted Audience card).
- Green** pays 4 coins to the reserve, takes the card and places it in their army area, then moves their token forward 1 space on the Influence track.



### Right Card

- Red** reveals their Tithe token.
- Purple** then reveals an Elimination token and announces a 1 Strength bid.
- Gray** also reveals an Elimination and decides to increase the bid to 2 Strength.

### As a result:

- Red** gains 2 coins (2 coins from their army but no coins from the target card, since it has been Eliminated ).
  - Purple** loses the Elimination bid. They keep the card they wanted to use for this Elimination , but gain nothing from the Audience.
  - Gray** flips 2 cards with a Strength of 1 face down in their discard area and moves forward 1 space on the Soul track.
- The Chaos token moves forward a number of spaces equal to the card's Influence 5, 1 space in this example.



Gray player's Elimination :  
Used cards are turned face down.



Gray player gains  
1/4 Soul .



Move the Chaos   
token forward 1 space.



## VICTORY CONDITIONS

In order to claim the Throne of the Underworld, players must meet one of the following objectives:



### Gain enough Influence

If a player reaches 20 points on the **Influence** track (before the Chaos token gets there), they win the game at the end of the current Audience.

OR



### Have the strongest army if Chaos reaches 21 Influence before the players reach space 20.

If the Chaos token reaches 21 Influence before the players reach space 20, war breaks out. When that happens, the winner is whichever player has the strongest army as determined by the total combined Strength rating of their face-up cards.

*Reminder: Eternal cards are not added to the army count for the battle against Chaos.*

OR



### Gather all 4 Elements and 1 complete Soul

The rightful ruler of the Throne of the Underworld is they who control all 5 Elements: Fire, Air, Water, Earth, and Soul at the end of an Audience.

Elements are collected when a player has a face-up card with the corresponding symbol in their army. Soul is gathered (with the exception of Nidhöggr) by Eliminating cards in order to claim quarters or halves of a Soul. In order to control the Soul required to win, you must have a complete Soul (see page 5).

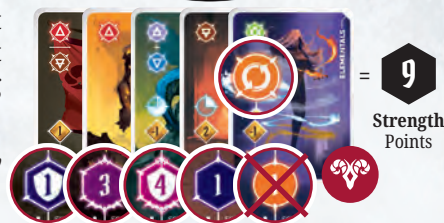
OR



### Assemble 2 of the 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse

If a player has 2 of the 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse in their army, they win the game at the end of the current Audience.

*Reminder: The Headless Horseman does not count as a Horseman of the Apocalypse.*



### In the event of a Tie

If several players meet a victory condition during the same Audience, the one with the most victory conditions reached wins the game (for instance, a player could have 2 Horsemen of the Apocalypse and 20 Influence points).


If this is not enough to break the tie, the one with the highest total Strength on their army's face-up Legendary cards wins the game.

If there is still a tie, the one with the most face-up cards in their army wins the game.

If this is still not enough to break the tie, the one with the most Horsemen of the Apocalypse in their army wins the game.


## SPECIAL CARDS




**Standard-Bearer:** A Standard-Bearer cannot be exchanged with or taken by another player. If the bearer is used to Eliminate  a card, flip it face down and leave it as a reminder of your player color.

### Limited use abilities



**Djinn:** Place 3 coins from the reserve on this card when it joins your army and remove 1 each time you **Tithe**  in order to track its remaining uses.




**Hydra:** Place 3 coins from the reserve on this card when it joins your army and remove 1 each time you **Eliminate**  using the Hydra in order to track its remaining uses.

### Unlimited use abilities



**Dark Oracle:** This card's power can only be used if it is face-up in your army area.




**Zombie:** This card always remains face-up in your army area, even if you use it during an **Elimination** . It cannot be targeted by the Devil's Soul.

### Muster effects (resolved at the end of the current Audience)

*If two of the following card effects are to be resolved at the end of the same Audience, perform them in the order below.*



**Devil's Soul:** **Eternal**  and **Zombie** cards cannot be chosen as targets for the discard effect. If you do not have any valid cards to discard, the Devil's Soul joins your army face down.



**The Headless Horseman:** If you choose to claim a **Horseman of the Apocalypse** from the draw pile, select the one you want and return the Headless Horseman to the draw pile before shuffling it.



**Siren:** This effect only targets face-up cards. The Siren itself, Standard-Bearers, and the other Audience card cannot be chosen as part of the exchange.



**Necromancer:** This effect only targets cards in the center discard area. The Necromancer itself and Standard-Bearers cannot be chosen as part of the exchange.



**Lich:** If several of your discarded creatures have the same **Strength**, you may choose which one to turn face up. Only the **Djinn** and **Hydra** abilities are refreshed by this effect.

*The Lich, Siren, and Necromancer effects only refresh the Djinn and Hydra abilities.*






**Nídhögr:** The Lich, Siren, and Necromancer effects do not refresh this card's ability.



**Reaper:** You cannot target a card that was discarded this turn.



**Shaman:** If the Shaman is **Eliminated**  or not **Mustered**  during the Audience, place the Shamanic Totem back in the box (the Totem does not make the Chaos  token advance). If both the Shaman and the Shamanic Totem are in play, the Siren and Necromancer abilities only affect one of the two cards, not both.

**Summon Effects:** When one of the one of the cards below joins your army, look for the card of your choice that fits the type requirements in the draw pile. It will be one of the 2 cards used for the next Audience. Once that is done, shuffle the draw pile. You may choose who gets the **First Player** token for the next Audience. The **First Player** token then resumes its movement as usual after the next Audience, as described on page 6.



**Cultist:** Target cards are the Air, Fire, Earth, and Water Spirits as well as the Elementals wild card.



**Succubus:** The Headless Horseman does not count as a Horseman of the Apocalypse.



## 2-PLAYER RULES

In a 2-player game, each player places 2 tokens per **Audience**. Players still only have one of each **Action** token, and cannot perform the same action twice in the same **Audience**.

### Step 1

In turn order, each player places their 1<sup>st</sup> **Action** token face down on the top half of the target card.

### Step 2



Still in turn order, each player places their 2<sup>nd</sup> **Action** token on the lower half of the target card. Players can choose to place a token on each card or place both tokens on the same card.




### Step 3




Reveal each **Action** token in the order in which they were placed.



Keep track of the state of your army before proceeding to the **Audience** resolution phase:



**Tithe** : The player collects coins equal to all visible cards at the start of the **Audience**. This means that even if some of their cards are discarded during the **Audience**, they still count toward their **Tithe**  income total.

**Muster** : Similarly, when a player **Musters** , they only take into consideration the state of their treasury at the start of the **Audience** phase, even if they also played their **Tithe**  token this turn.

**Elimination** : A player can only **Eliminate** using one or more cards that were in their army at the beginning of the **Audience**. If they **Muster**  a card during the current **Audience**, that recruit cannot immediately participate in an **Elimination**  attempt.

## First game or 5 & 6 player variant rules

Losing bids can be frustrating, even more so when a turn is wasted due to an action being canceled by another player's token choice. In order to alleviate this frustration a little, we suggest starting with a variant rule useful for beginners and at higher player counts.



When using this optional rule, a player whose bid fails (be it a **Muster**  or an **Elimination** ) receives 1 coin  from the reserve as compensation at the end of the **Audience**.

## OPEN INFORMATION


The only hidden piece of information in the game is which **Action** token is chosen and placed on an **Audience** card prior to their reveal.





Be sure to keep your treasury and your player color (remaining face-down **Action** tokens or **Standard-Bearer**) in full view so that other players can make informed decisions! Should your **Standard-Bearer** die in battle, the back of its card shows which color you are playing as. In order to make counting a player's treasury easier, we recommend exchanging coins for higher denomination coins from the reserve as much as possible.



A player's army, especially their **Elements** , how many **Horsemen of the Apocalypse**  they control, and the **Strength** of their cards must all remain clearly visible. Any player may look through the center discard area at any time.

## COUNTING AND DISCARD PILES

Each time a player uses a card to perform an **Elimination** , they turn the card face down and place it in their personal discard area. A player's position on the **Influence** track is equal to the sum of the **Influence** on all their cards, both the ones facing up and facing down.

Tracking the **Chaos**  token's position on the board is easily done by viewing the center discard area. Whenever a card (apart from an **Eternal**  card) is **Eliminated**  or is not added to a player's army at the end of the **Audience**, place it in the center discard area. The **Chaos**  token's position on the **Influence** track is equal to the sum of the **Strength** of all the cards in the center discard area.

*Warning: Player tokens cannot move back on the **Influence** or **Soul** tracks.*

*The **Chaos**  token only moves back on the **Influence** track when the **Reaper** card forces it to.*

## ◀ Credits ▶

A Pierre Lahmi game, illustrated by Adrien Rives.

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This is my first game and it's been 5 years since its creation and release, so sorry to the players for the mess bellow, but there are a lot of people to thank.

First, a big thank you to everyone who took part in this game's creation, from prototypes to prototypes: Étienne, Fred, and Fanny for beholding the chaos on the strips of paper and helping bring some order to it. Matthieu, PJ, Adrien, Jimmy, Alexandre B, Alexandre T, Maxime M, Rémi C, Vincent V and «le cercle des grands esprits». And of course, those who know the game better than me, thanks to Mickaël, Jordan, Raphael, Kévin and Benjamin who fought over and over again, relentlessly and passionately vying for the Throne of the Underworld.

A sweet thought for all those who took part in the project with their presence and their love: Julianne and Marie who provided me with a calm, tranquil space in which to create chaos, Audrey, Camille, Nadège, Nico, Sasha, Jeremy, Adé, Marc K, Thibaud, Benoit L, my pupils, the quackers, the funniest, Tupette. Without forgetting my family : Mum, Dad, Lucien, Laure, Vanessa, Alex, Valérie, my nephews and nieces and Marion who makes my daily life a never-ending game.

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