

Materia Prima

Rulebook



And the earth opened like a blossom with the first ray of the sun, and the unspeakable came forth. Glaring light and bitter cold. And within a blink of an eye, it took all corruption from us and ascended to heaven ...

Gorgol III 12, 51

Saga

Alka Sowa is the western part of the continent of Istra, a huge country bordered by the Grey Sea to the west and the insuperable Burr Mounts to the east. To the south, the vast expanse tapers towards the Widow's Cape and to the north the great Istrion River forms the border with the northern kingdoms.

The name *Alka Sowa* is said to have originally meant "Land of the Alkanes" and it was only used for the region around the Istrion estuary. The Alkanes are considered to have been the first settlers of the continent, bringing not only their animals, plants and customs to *Alka Sowa* from that river delta, but also Alchemy. With its help, they made the land their own. At first, they only cultivated their fields and kept cattle. But soon they dammed rivers, dug mines, cleared forests and built cities.

Alchemy not only served as a science and instrument, it was also passion, ideology and religion. While today it is simply known as the study of the properties of substances and their reactions, the spectrum of Alchemy ranged from chemistry to physics and pharmacy. Alchemists were astronomers and doctors. They understood the structure of matter and possessed the power to transmute elements into other conditions. Some sources report experiments with living creatures that even produced abhorrent beings. However, these are mostly old wives' tales told to naughty children.

The Alchemist's most important achievement was the Philosopher's Stone, based on which their power seemed to grow immeasurably. It was an alchemical product itself, as well as being its most important tool. With its help, they stabilized the transmuted compounds and made them permanent. Few knew how it was made, but *Opus Magnum*, the fundamental book of Alchemy, contained its formula. Today, only myths speak of the stone and the book.

This is because the former tribal leaders abused the power of the stone. They became powerful rulers whose lunacy and tyranny heralded the end of this first age. Then, at the zenith of their power, when Alchemy was even able to control the way beyond the earthly, knowledge and all of its products were extinguished in a single moment. It was as if alchemy had never existed. Today, this event is called the "Day of Dawn". Many saw it as a punishment by the gods for the presumptuousness of men. They were all tired of striving for false truthfulness and its abominable consequences and they sought their salvation in religion. And the ancient knowledge fell into oblivion.

All this is more than an era ago, yet one hears of adepts researching old recipes in libraries and druids experimenting with elements in secrecy. Some even call themselves Alchemists.

Spielmaterial

7 Game board tiles



8 Game board frame tiles



5+3 Alchemist cards



4+2 Tower cards



4 Szenario cards



3 Town cards



11+5 Quest cards



3 Harbor cards



2 Temple cards



14 Tower extension markers



5+3 Alchemist figures



28+12 Homunculus figures



4+2 Tower figures



12 Inquisitor figures



6 Szenario figures

work in progress

5 Game board markers

work in progress

28+12 Homunculus cards



25+15 Equipment cards



24+6 Philosopher's Stone cards



24 Alarm cards



36 Inquisitor cards



24 Townquest cards



180+81 Element markers



5+2 Philosopher's Stone markers



9 Soulstone markers



30 Alarm markers



6 Wisdom value markers



4 X-markers



1 Hourglass marker



8 Dice



20+11 Figure stands



The distillation is the pure expression of a quality, the essence is the heart of a quality and the quintessence is a quality in its universal meaning.

Alchemical basic knowledge

Game Mechanics

In *Materia Prima*, you move your alchemist from his tower across a board divided into hexagonal squares to collect elements, and in your tower you turn these elements into items or homunculi.

In each round, the alchemists have a certain number of actions that they may use freely. There are basic actions, such as moving across the game board, mining elements or attacking other players. There are also actions that are only possible on certain hexes, such as transmuting things in the tower or researching recipes in towns.

An important key to success are the homunculi, because they help the alchemist to realize his plans faster. Indeed in each round, in addition to the actions that you perform with your alchemist, you may also use the actions of the homunculi. The more homunculi you have, the more actions you have in a round. However, you should take care of your homunculi, because they are a desirable target for attacks by other players.





The core mechanics of *Materia Prima* comprise mining and transmuting elements to generate wisdom points. The elements have to be collected on the game board and transmuted into objects or homunculi in your own alchemist tower. The first alchemist to collect **25 wisdom points** wins. There are six ways to gain wisdom points:



1. You transmute a recipe from the three different recipe card types (Homunculi, Equipment, Philosopher's Stone). You pay the costs of a recipe with the previously-collected elements.
2. You transmute a Philosopher's Stone. Since the Philosopher's Stone represents the highest art of alchemy, it also generates the most wisdom points. A Philosopher's Stone is made from three partial recipes. The ingredients and requirements for this can vary: some partial recipes require certain elements, while others require the soul stone of an alchemist.
3. You fulfill your secret quest during the game. These quests can influence the player's playing style, as they generate a large number of wisdom points. There are quests where you have to bring elements to a certain place, but also quests where certain objects or homunculi have to be transmuted.
4. You fight against other players and get their soul stone.
5. You improve your tower by buying tower extensions with elements in the towns.
6. You complete town quests to gain wisdom points.

Alchemy is the connection to the verities of the world, which the gods refuse us.

Togal the Wise

Game Preparation

Before the hunt for the Philosopher's Stone can begin, a few preparations must be made.

1. The game board frame is set up and the seven-part game board are arranged in it. The arrangement of the board tiles is reserved for the oldest player.
2. The town cards are placed on the game board frame. The tower extension markers are shuffled face down and one marker is placed face up on each town card.
3. One of the two temple cards is placed randomly on the game board frame.
4. The townquest cards are shuffled and one townquest is placed face up on each town card. The remaining cards are placed face down in a draw pile on the top right of the board frame.
5. Each player chooses an Alchemist and a tower with the corresponding figures and cards. Furthermore, each player takes five figure stands of one color.
6. All players draw two quest cards face down, choose one and discard the other. Only those quests that are suitable for the chosen number of players are available.
7. Each player receives a soul stone, which he places on the Alchemist card.
8. From the three different recipe card decks (Homunculi, Equipment, Philosopher's Stone), all cards with the wisdom value 1 are taken out and each player receives a face-down card from these cards in each recipe type (three cards in total).

3 Recipe piles

9



7 Game board tile and frame

Tower and Alchemist player YELL



2

6 Town cards with tower extension

4

6 face up townquest cards

7

Soul stone

Tower card

Alchemist card



4

12

3

10 Element markers

1 pile of townquest cards

Wisdom value markers

Temple card

Dice 10

3 Recipe cards with wisdom value 1

Wisdom value

8

1

6 Quest card



5

5

9. The remaining recipe cards with the wisdom value 1 are shuffled with the other cards according to their recipe type and placed next to the game board.
10. The dice and the element markers are placed next to the game board.
11. The players decide who starts (usually the youngest).
12. In clockwise order, the players place their tower figures and their alchemist figures on a hex on the game board. You only have to ensure that they are not placed on a element hex, a town or an opposing tower. **The knowledge point markers in the player's colors are placed on the number 3 of the knowledge point track on the game board frame.**

Now the game can begin.

Two-Player Setup

For a game with two players or for a greater challenge for three and four players, the following steps should be considered when setting up the game:

The board tiles are double-sided. Some of them have more element mines on one side than on the other. Lay out the game board so that each element mine (fire, water, earth, air, iron) is represented only once.

The town cards have two sides. The difference is the number of recipe types available in the towns. Lay them out so that only one type of recipe is available in each town.

Everything rises and falls, the swing of the pendulum expresses itself in everything. The swing of the pendulum to the right is the measure of the swing to the left.

Verse XII der Tabula Alba 56, 7

Elements

In the Alchemist's world, everything revolves around the transmutation of things and living beings. But for everything that they create, they need special ingredients. Some can be mined as elements (earth, water, air, fire, iron) directly on the game board, while others are more valuable and must be fabricated from the simple elements.

A round element marker equals one element unit.



A square element marker equals three element units.

This icon displays which element can be mined from the hex.



Higher-level elements can be transmuted in the alchemy tower (see **Towers** on page 16).

The elements are divided into three levels, which differ not only in their value, but also in their power. The following plan shows all elements and their relationship with each other. For example, to create a level 2 element you need two level 1 elements. The diagram on the right shows how the different elements can be created.





Game Board

The game board comprises seven modular tiles, which can be rearranged with each game to drastically change the game experience. There are three different types of hexes on the game board: element mines, towns and free hexes.

Free hexes

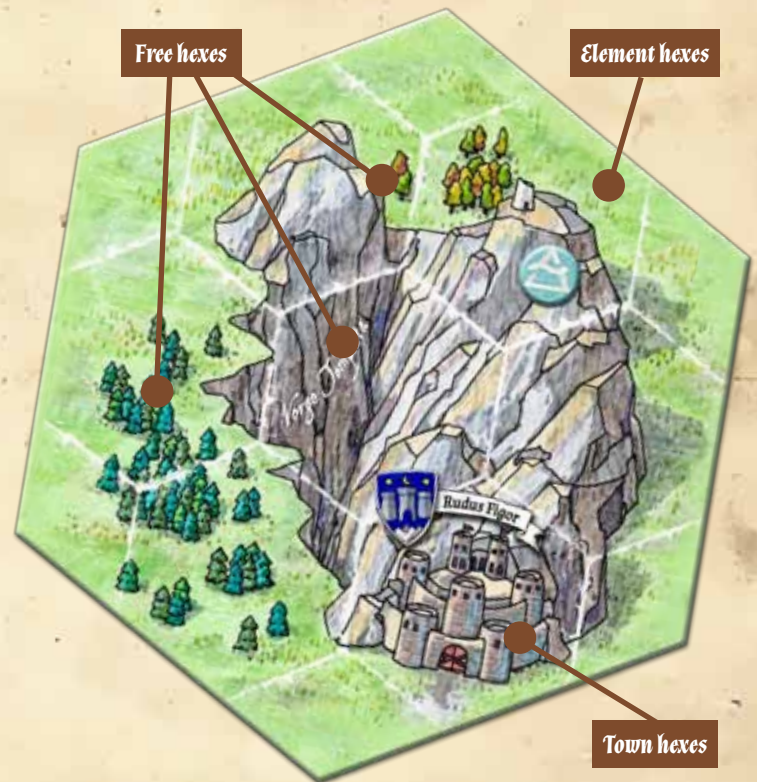
On the game board, each hex is free if there are neither element icons nor town icons on it. If a figure stands on a free hex, it has three possible actions. It can move, attack someone or discard something. A fourth possible action is added if elements have been discarded on a free hex, in which cases these can be taken up again by the mining action.

Element hexes

An element mine is marked by an element icon on the hex. In addition to moving, fighting and discarding, a figure on this hex can mine the special element shown on the icon.

Towns

The towns are very special hexes. In addition to the four basic actions (move, fight, discard and mine), an Alchemist can research recipes and buy improvements for his tower. In addition, he can fulfill town quests there.



NOTE: Even incomplete hexes that appear at the edges of the game board can be entered and used by game figures.





Secretly, in magic rings,
the darkness, where no gaze could see,
where I saw nothing of things
and sent nothing radiating me
than that guiding light that burned in your heart!

Verse IX of Draura II, 45





Alchemists

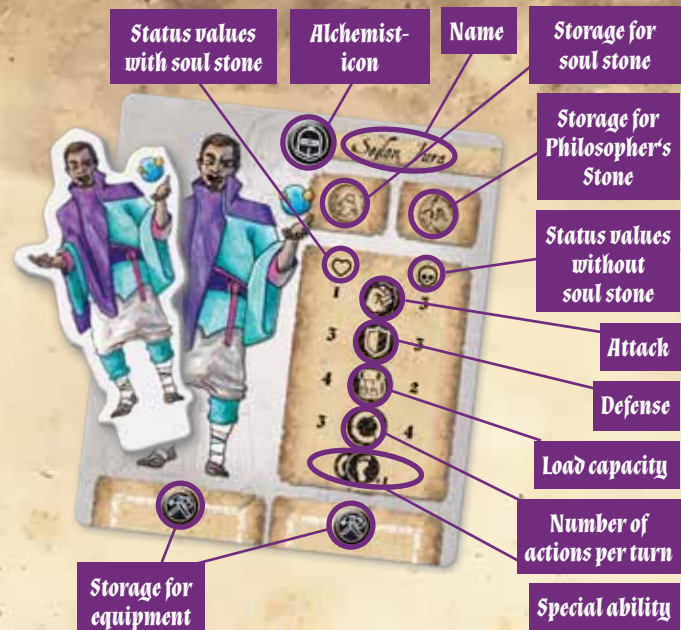
Each Alchemist has its own figure and Alchemist card. The figure marks the current location on the board. The Alchemist card shows an Alchemist's name and characteristics. The properties are divided into two columns (see **Life and Death** on page 10). The side with the heart shows the status values that he has when he owns at least one soul stone, while the side with the skull shows the values when he has lost his last soul stone.

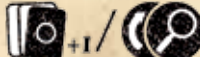

Each Alchemist has different status values. The following information can be read on the alchemist cards:



-  | Number of dice on an attack roll
-  | Number of dice on a defensive roll
-  | Number of elements that a figure can carry
-  | Number of actions to be performed per turn


Besides the different status values, each alchemist has an individual special ability, which is displayed as an icon.



-  +I Get one additional moving action per turn.
-  +I Get one additional mining action per turn.
-  +I Get one additional fighting action per turn.
-  +I Get one additional transmuting action per turn.






 +I /  Draw four recipe cards with each research action and keep two of them.

 +I /  Get one more element of the corresponding mine with each mining action.

 Hold one more face-down recipe card in your hand.

 ~~~~ You do not have to be on a town hex to perform a research action. Any type of recipe can be researched.

 ~~~~ You do not have to be on the tower hex to perform a transmutation action. All the necessary elements must be carried. Transmuted equipment and philosopher's stone cards are placed on the alchemist's tableau as equipment. Homunculi appear on the square where the transmutation took place.



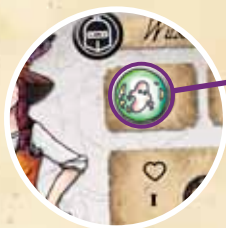
Soul Stone

Every Alchemist has a soul (Lapis Anima), which he can lose in a battle (see **Fight** on page 13 and 14). A soul stone is a special element that can only be carried by an Alchemist. It may not be taken up by a homunculus.

When an Alchemist attains a second or even a third soul, these function like an extra life. They do not occupy any space in the inventory. In every lost battle, an Alchemist has to give up a soul, but only when he doesn't have one anymore, is he considered as defeated and becomes a soulless being.

Soul stones may be discarded on any hex except a tower hex. They may also be used for transmutations, even if this means that the respective Alchemist becomes a soulless being.

In general, each soul stone is worth three wisdom points in the final scoring. Since every Alchemist starts the game with a soul stone, every player starts with three wisdom points. If an Alchemist does not have a soul stone, three knowledge points are subtracted from his total score. When the 25 wisdom points are reached to end the game, this subtraction must be taken into account.



The soul stones are placed here on the Alchemist card.



Example: With this equipment card, a new soul stone can be transmuted.



Example: This recipe card for the Philosopher's Stone requires a soul stone for transmutation.

Life and Death

As soon as an Alchemist loses his last soul stone in battle, the following rules apply to him:

1. His status values change, and beginning with the next round the values beneath the skull apply.
2. He becomes stronger, but loses wisdom points as a result.

If an Alchemist gets a soul stone back in battle or by transmutation, beginning with the next round, the status values beneath the heart symbol apply again.

NOTE: Even if an Alchemist loses his soul, there are no consequences for his homunculi. Even objects are not affected and can be used without a soul stone.

A spark illuminates the darkness,
a spark ignites a fire,
a spark blazes during the day,
a spark annihilates misery!

Verse MXI of Erringa 52, 11

Action Overview

Each Alchemist usually has three actions in one turn, which he can invest at will. He can move, mine or discard elements and fight. It doesn't matter which actions he performs in one turn and in which order he does so. If he is satisfied when taking fewer than his available actions, he can stop his turn at any time and the next player's turn arrives.


In addition to the four basic actions, there are other possible actions in the Alchemist tower and the towns. In towns, recipes can be researched and tower extensions can be bought. However, in the tower elements can be transformed, recipes can be transmuted and equipment can be exchanged.

While Alchemists can use all actions, homunculi may only use the four basic actions if their status values allow it. For example, if a homunculus has no value for the load capacity, he is not allowed to mine elements and bring them to the tower.

The number of actions that an Alchemist may perform in one turn.



Basic Actions (Alchemists and Homunculi)

Moving  | Move to an adjoining hex!

Mining  | Get elements from a mine!


Discarding  | Drop elements on your hex!

Fighting  | Attack on an adjoining hex!

Actions in the Tower (Alchemists)


Converting  | Convert elements!


Transmuting  | Create homunculi or equipment!

Equip  | Exchange elements and equipment!

Actions in the Towns (Alchemists)

Researching  | Acquire a new recipe (draw 2, choose 1)!

Purchase  | Get an extension marker for your tower!

Sail  | Move to an adjoining harbor town!



Basic Actions

Move

The game board is divided into hexagonal fields. Each figure (Alchemist or Homunculus) can move to any adjoining hex with one action. There are no natural boundaries on the board. The only restriction is that a hex on which another player's Alchemist or Homunculus is standing may neither be crossed nor designated as a target. A player's tower hex may not be entered either. A player's Alchemist and his Homunculi may share a hex.



Mine

On the map, there are element hexes where elements (iron, fire, water, air and earth) can be mined. These hexes are marked with a corresponding icon. As soon as a figure (Alchemist or Homunculus) is standing on one of these hexes, he can use an action to mine a unit of the respective element. The mined elements are placed on either the Alchemist card or the homunculus card. However, you have to pay attention to how many elements a figure can carry.



Every atom, every planet, every galaxy longs for its very own purpose, the whole universe strives for transmutation.

Togal the Wise

Basic Actions

Discard

Within one action, a figure can discard as many elements as it carries with it on the hex on which it stands. These remain there and can be resumed by mining them again. Discarded elements have to be “mined” again with an action to pick them up, just as if they were mined from the element hexes.

Example: Vitrudes has an attack value of 3 and Sejlon has a defense value of 3.



Fight

All Alchemists and homunculi usually have both an attack and a defense value. If there is an opposing Alchemist or homunculus in an adjoining hex, a figure can attack it with an action. It can attack as often as it has free actions in the current turn. If there are several figures of a player in one hex, the attacker may choose whom to attack.



Example: Vitrudes attacks Sejlon in an adjacent hex.

As soon as an attack is initiated, the following three steps must be completed:

1. A figure (Alchemist or Homunculus) attacks an adjoining figure. In an attack, both the attack value of a figure and the dice result must be taken into account. For the attack, the number of dice that the attack value specifies are used. The die numbers are added and the result is the strength of the attack roll.



Example: The strength of Vitrudes' attack roll is 4.



Example: Seilon is placed on his tower hex, Vitrudes receives as many elements as he can carry, and the remaining elements as well as Seilon's soul stone fall on the attacked figures's hex.



2. The attacked figure has the possibility to defend itself against an attack. The number of dice that the defensive value of the figure specifies are rolled. The die numbers are added and the result is the strength of the defense roll. If the strength of the defense roll is higher than or equal to the strength of the attack roll, the attack is repelled and nothing else happens. If the strength of the defense roll is lower, step 3 follows.



Example: The strength of Seilon's defensive roll is only 3 and he is defeated.



3. As soon as the attack is successful and cannot be repelled, the opponent's figure is considered to be defeated.

A defeated **Homunculus** is removed from the game board and all of its elements become the property of the attacker. The defeated player keeps the wisdom points that the Homunculus is worth and has to let the homunculus' recipe card be displayed in front of him.

A defeated **Alchemist** is placed back on his tower hex and one of his soul stones as well as all his carried-along elements become the property of the attacker.

In both cases, the attacker decides which elements he keeps according to his maximum capacity. The others fall on the field of the attacked figure. If the attacker is an Alchemist, he **must** pick up the soul stone. If the attacker is a homunculus, the soul stone falls on the hex of the attacked.

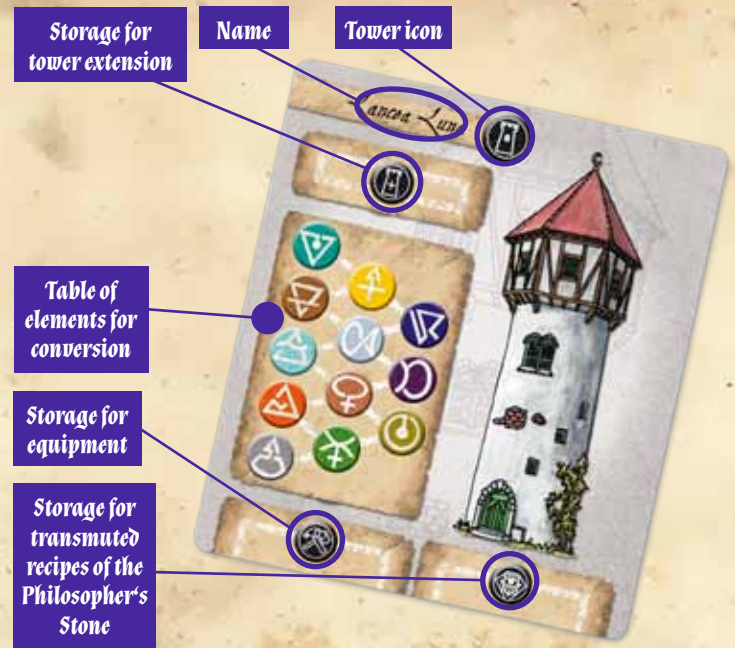
If an Alchemist loses his last soul stone, he does not simply vanish, but rather he continues to exist as a soulless being and has the possibility to recapture his soul stone (see **Life and Death** on page 10).

And even if one found the Philosopher's Stone by causing transmutation, he would never be able to produce it, unless he already carried it within him.

Kalda the Seer 77, 12

Towers

Placed at the beginning of the game, an Alchemist's tower not only offers him a roof over his head, but it is also his fortification and storage house. Once an Alchemist or one of his homunculi is in his tower, he cannot be attacked. In addition, a foreign Alchemist cannot enter the tower hex even in his absence. The tower also serves as a storage facility. Since each figure can only carry a certain number of element units, it's good to know that you can safely unload them in the tower and thus prevent other Alchemists from accessing them.



Therefore, at the beginning of the game where the tower is placed holds strong importance. An unfavorable placement can decide between victory and defeat. You should ensure that at least one town and two element mines are easily accessible. The secret quest should also be easy to fulfill from the tower's location on the game board.



Equip



In the tower, you can pick up or drop as many elements as an Alchemist or homunculus can carry with one equip action. Once an Alchemist performs a conversion or transmutation, he does not need to perform an additional equip action. Equipment that is moved between the Alchemist and the tower must also be swapped with an equip action.

Example: Vitruvius discards 2 elements in the tower with one action.

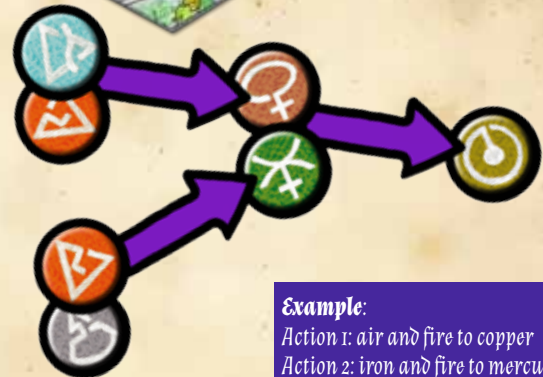


Convert



The action of element conversion is a form of transmutation. For example, Alchemists are only able to produce mercury from fire and iron in their own laboratory. A conversion is only possible if the Alchemist has the necessary source elements. It doesn't matter whether the source elements are placed on the Alchemist card or the tower card, as long as the Alchemist figure is placed on the tower hex.

Example: Sejlon converts gold. He needs 1 air, 2 fire and 1 iron element. Each conversion is an action.



Example:
 Action 1: air and fire to copper
 Action 2: iron and fire to mercury
 Action 3: copper and mercury to gold

Sky above, sky below
Stars above, stars below,
Everything that's above is below.
Take thus and be blessed.

Verse III of Orata 45, 23

Towers

Transmute



An Alchemist repeatedly stumbles over recipes for equipment or homunculi. In order to carry out a transmutation according to these recipes, he needs all of the elements shown on them. He must use an action to create the item or homunculus.

- Equipment cards must be equipped immediately on the Alchemist card or stored on the tower card.
- Partial recipes of the Philosopher's Stone must be stored on the tower card.
- Homunculi cards are placed next to the Alchemist card and the matching homunculi figure is positioned on the tower hex.



Example: Seijon transmutes a shovel from 1 copper and 1 mercury.

Tower extension

Each tower can be improved with a tower extension, which can be bought in the towns. The extensions help to transmute or grant one free element per turn, which can be stored directly in the tower. A player may have more than one tower extension. However, only one extension may be active per turn.

Costs for the tower extension



When converting elements, earth can be used as water and water as earth

Receive an fire element in each turn and store it in the tower



Here tower extension markers are placed on the tower cards.

NOTE: As soon as an Alchemist performs a conversion or transmutation, he can move as many elements as he wants between the Alchemist card and the tower card without having to perform an additional action.

Towns

In Alka Sowa, there are towns whose chronicles and stories are as old as the continent itself. On their markets, tower extensions can be bought and in their libraries old recipes can be researched. But not every town offers all kinds of recipes. The corresponding town card indicates which (equipment, homunculus, Philosopher's Stone) can be purchased in a town. Furthermore, town quests can be completed in the towns (see Town quests on page 18).



Purchase



In every town, there are markets and craftsmen. They offer a variety of goods that help Alchemists to improve their tower laboratories. On each town card, there is a tower extension marker, which can be bought with an action. The Alchemist needs the required element in his inventory to do this. He then hands it in with the purchase action and may place the tower extension marker directly in the corresponding space on his tower card. The effect of the tower extension takes place with the next player's turn. As soon as a extension marker has been purchased, a new one must be drawn face down and placed on the town card.



Example: Sejlon researches a recipe for an equipment card in Rudus Figor

Example: Sejlon buys a tower extension in Rudus Figor

Example: Sejlon fulfills a town quest in Rudus Figor. Here he must drop a mercury element.

Research



In every town, there are libraries and bookshops where an Alchemist can research recipes for homunculi, equipment and the Philosopher's Stone. The recipe research costs one action and can only be done by Alchemists. The player draws two cards from the corresponding deck, chooses one and discards the other one.

One of the three will appear,
and all will be deceived.
Lifeless his body seems,
but only to the faithless.
Thus a gaping emptiness
will fill the hearts with warmth.

Prophecy of Myrras 54, 89

Harbor Towns

When the first settlers reached Alka Sowa over an aeon ago, the port cities of Bosvadum, Aestis Testa and Tristigis were the first settlements on the continent. Thanks to flourishing maritime trade, they were able to maintain their independence for a long time, and today they are considered important cultural centers. In these towns, tower upgrades can be purchased, city orders can be fulfilled, and sailing voyages can be made.



Sail

The sail action allows Alchemists to perform a quick travel between the harbor towns. Homunculi and Inquisitors cannot perform the sail action. Which destinations can be determined by a sail action can be found on the corresponding town card.

Town emblem

Town name

Sail:
An Alchemist can be moved to Aestis Testa with a sailing action.

Tower extension:
With a mercury element, this tower extension can be purchased.

Town quest:
By discarding a level 1 Philosopher's Stone card, this Town quest can be fulfilled.



Townquests

The Inquisition's influence is most evident in the major towns, and its actions against the alchemists' guild are becoming more numerous and merciless. The Alchemists can oppose the Inquisition by completing the townquests in the respective towns and thus gaining wisdom points. A townquest is randomly placed in each town at the beginning of the game. When a player completes a town quest, the corresponding card is placed face up in his play area and a new townquest card is placed on the town card.



| **Attack the Inquisition**

If an attack action beats the defense value of the townquest card, the quest is considered fulfilled. The defense value of the townquest card is static and does not need to be rolled.

| **Drop an Element**

When the illustrated element has been discarded, the quest is considered to be completed. The element goes back into the general supply.

| **Sacrifice a Homunculus**

When a homunculus with the specified level moves onto the town hex, the quest is considered fulfilled. Both the homunculus figure and the homunculus card are returned to the general supply.

| **Drop an Equipment item**

If an already transmuted equipment item of the specified level has been discarded while the alchemist is standing on the town hex, the quest is considered fulfilled. The equipment card goes back into the general supply.

| **Drop a Fragment of the Philosopher's Stone**

If an already transmuted philosopher's stone fragment of the specified level has been discarded, the quest is considered fulfilled. The Philosopher's Stone card must be carried by the alchemist like an equipment card and is returned to the general supply after being discarded.

Let the shadows dissolve,
let the fog dissipate,
let the smoke disperse,
then you will see the fruit of the light.


Verse XIV of Orata 76, 6

Temple of Senex Ara

Hidden among the steep chasms and unreachable peaks of the Blade Mountains lies the ruined temple of Senex Ara. The purpose of the temple can be determined at the beginning of the game, either deliberately or by chance, by laying out one side of the two Senex Ara temple cards. In total, there are four possible functions of the temple.

- 1. Transmuting a soul stone:** Alchemists can generate a soul stone either by moving a level 3 homunculus to the temple hex or by dropping a level 3 equipment item on the temple hex. The player may immediately place a soul stone on his Alchemist card. Either the homunculus card and the figure or the equipment card are then removed from the game and the player loses the wisdom points gained as a result.
- 2. Researching recipes:** Alchemists can research homunculus, equipment, or Philosopher's Stone recipes on the temple hex, just as they do in towns.
- 3. Rolling dice for elements:** Alchemists can roll a die to obtain a level 3 element by spending an action on the temple field. On a roll of two, the player may choose any Level 3 element to place directly into their alchemist's inventory. On a roll of one, nothing happens. If no number is rolled, the player must place one element of the highest level that his alchemist carries in his inventory back into the general supply.
- 4. Buying a Tower Extension:** Alchemists can use a buy action on the temple hex to purchase one of four tower extension markers that are randomly placed there at the beginning of the game.





Hints and Tricks

Protect your homunculi

Because a Homunculus is eliminated from the game when it is defeated, the loss of a Level 2 or 3 Homunculus hurts especially badly. Therefore, you should always keep an eye out for strong enemies nearby. You should never forget that homunculi are safe in the tower and cannot be attacked. Often it is more advisable to leave the homunculus in the tower and let its actions expire, so that you do not risk its life.



Use your soul stone

Losing your soulstone costs 5 penalty points, but that doesn't mean you have to keep your soulstone for the entire game. Most of an alchemist's attributes improve when he no longer has a soulstone, which brings significant advantages. He is stronger in combat, has more action, and most importantly: nothing left to lose. If you don't want to wait for another alchemist to take your soulstone, you can use it yourself for a transmutation and make a level 3 recipe for the Philosopher's Stone with it.

Place your tower wisely

The correct positioning of the tower can decide about victory and defeat already at the beginning of the game. There are a few things to keep in mind:

- Position the tower in close proximity to element mines. Quick and easy acquisition of raw materials is the key to victory.
- The tower should not be too far from the place needed to complete the secret mission.
- Secure access to a nearby town, in order to be able to re-search recipes.
- Stay away from the other towers. The closer the towers are, the higher the potential for conflict.



Buy suitable tower extensions

Placing your tower at the beginning of the game can create certain advantages and disadvantages, as some element mines are closer than others. In order to use the advantages properly and iron out the disadvantages, you can buy tower extensions in the towns, which improve the capabilities of your own tower.

- Alchemy distinguishes three stages of transmutation:
1. The Nigredo is the most original form of all elements.
 2. The Albedo is an unstable unconfirmed state of the elements.
 3. The Rubedo is the purest form that an element can acquire.

Alchemical basic knowledge

Recipe Cards

In Materia Prima, there are three different types of recipe cards that can be explored in the cities:

- With the Homunculi recipes, little helpers can be transmuted to help you fight and collect elements.
- With the Equipment recipes, weapons and items can be transmuted, which improve the alchemists' abilities.
- With the Philosopher's Stone recipes, the Philosopher's Stone can be transmuted.

Once a recipe has been transmuted, it is laid out from the face-down hand in front of the player and is now considered a real being or item in the game.



NOTE: An Alchemist may only have three face-down recipes (Equipment, Philosopher's Stone, Homunculi) in his hand. It doesn't matter which recipe types you hold. As soon as he gets a fourth recipe, he must discard one of his choice.

Homunculi cards are placed next to the Alchemist card.



Active equipment cards are placed at the bottom of the Alchemist card.

Inactive equipment cards are placed at the bottom of the tower card.

Philosopher's Stone cards are placed at the bottom of the tower card.

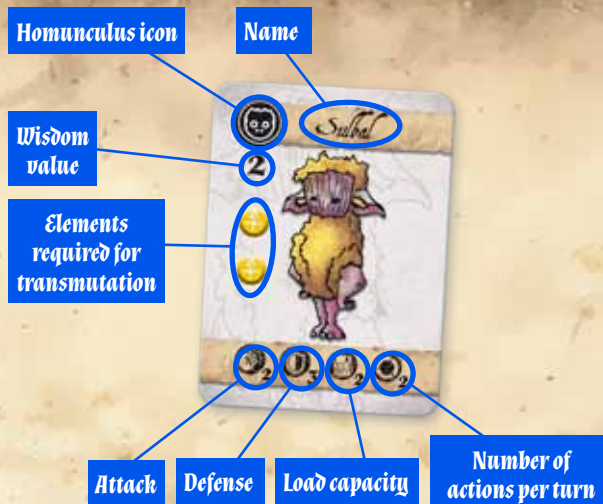
REMEMBER: When an Alchemist researches a recipe with an action in the town, the player takes two cards face down from the pile of the corresponding recipe type (Homunculi, Equipment or Philosopher's Stone). He may not draw cards from two different recipe types with one action. He chooses one of the two drawn cards, takes it face down and places the other face up on a discard pile. Whenever recipe cards are discarded, for whatever reason, they are discarded face up on the discard pile matching the recipe type.

Homunculi

Every Alchemist is able to create smaller or larger helpers with the help of transmutation. These are called homunculi. Therefore, he needs a homunculus card and the element units indicated on it. Once a homunculus has been created, the homunculus card must be placed next to the Alchemist card. The homunculus figure is placed on the tower hex and as soon as the player's turn arrives again, he can control the homunculus like any other figure according to its action number.



NOTE: An Alchemist may never have more than three homunculi on the game board. If an Alchemist transmutes a fourth, he must resolve an active homunculus of his choice. He keeps the recipe card and the wisdom points.



Homunculi have special abilities that help the Alchemist to achieve his goal of attaining the Philosopher's Stone. However, an Alchemist is unable to control an infinite number of homunculi. Therefore, the maximum number for each is limited to three. Like with the elements, there are three levels of homunculi that define their value and power. Unlike an Alchemist, a homunculus has limited possibilities to act. For example, not every homunculus can fight. They also differ in terms of the number of their actions and the extent of their capacity. The homunculus card indicates which abilities such a helper possesses. Furthermore, homunculi are unable to perform transmute, purchase or research actions.

NOTE: An Alchemist cannot exchange elements with his homunculus, hand them over to him, nor take them away from him. A transfer must always be done by discarding and mining or via the tower.

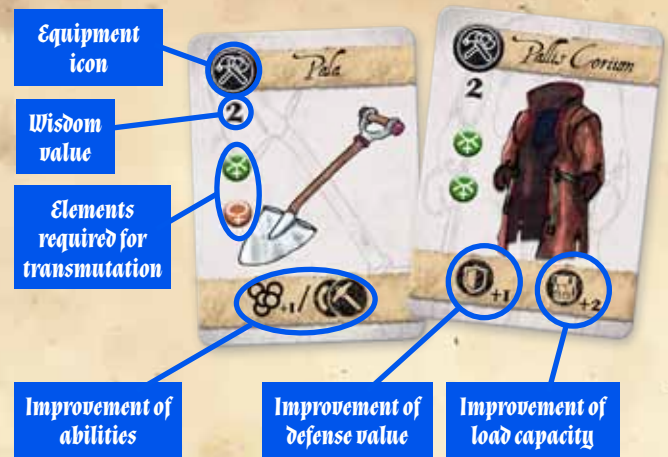
One strided into the light,
one strided into the darkness,
one remained in the twilight.
The three were born.

Verse III of Urs Pax 4, 13

Equipment

Using transmutation, any Alchemist can generate equipment that gives him various advantages. However, he can only carry a maximum of two items. Weapons increase the attack value, shields and armor improve the defense value and enchanted jewelry grants special abilities. As with elements and homunculi, there are three different levels of equipment that define their value and power.

To make equipment, you need an equipment card and the elements indicated on it. When an item is made, it must either be equipped immediately or stored in the tower. Equipment can be stored in the tower without any limitation. Status changes and abilities of equipment items always become active in the next turn.



Soul Stone Recipes

The soul stone is a special equipment card, as it is not placed into the alchemist's inventory. When a soul stone is transmuted, the player takes a soul stone marker and places it on the Alchemist card. The recipe card must be discarded on the equipment card discard pile.

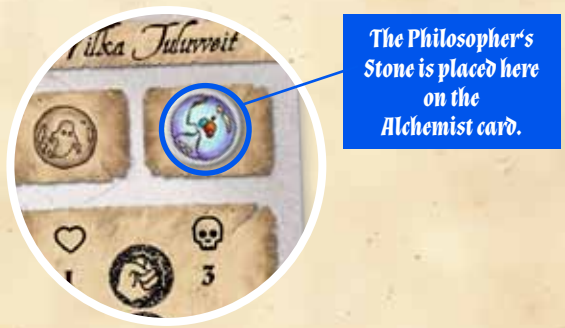
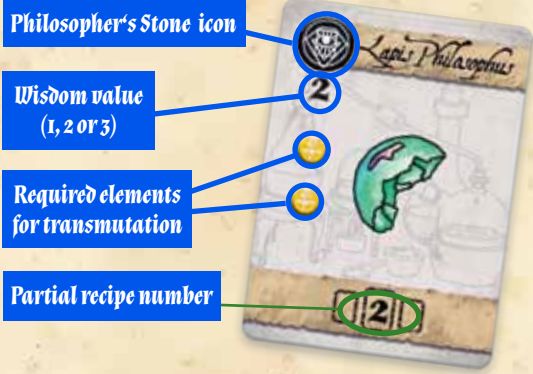




Philosopher's Stone

The Philosopher's Stone (Lapis Philosophus) is the purest form of Alchemy and its production is the master discipline of every Alchemist. In order to transmute such a stone, an Alchemist must first search for recipes in the towns. A Philosopher's Stone is made from three partial recipes. When collecting the partial recipes, all wisdom value numbers from one to three must be present. Each Alchemist can only transmute one of each partial recipes and as a result only one stone.

As soon as a partial recipe has been transmuted, it must be uncovered and stored in the corresponding field on the tower card. When an Alchemist has transmuted all three recipes, he receives a Philosopher's Stone marker, which he can place on his Alchemist card.



NOTE: Unlike a soul stone, the Philosopher's Stone cannot be taken from an Alchemist in a fighting action.

Like leg dislocation, like blood dislocation,
so limb dislocation:
Leg to leg, blood to blood,
limb to limb, as glued they shall be!

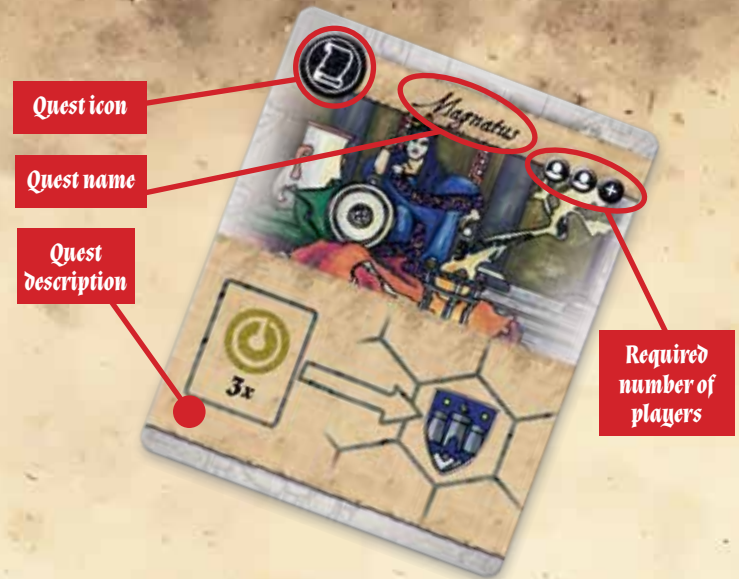
Verse VI of Tabula Alba 19, 4

Secret Quest

Alchemy has a centuries-old tradition and its masters come from families, schools and guilds whose history is as old as the records that tell of them. Some have a special alchemical codex, while others act out of love or revenge, and there are those who have gone mad due to the power of the Philosopher's Stone and want to plunge the world into chaos. Every single biography results in a secret quest. However, this secret should be guarded, since the competitors will exploit every weakness.

Each player has the opportunity to complete a secret quest, which is worth nine wisdom points in the final score. If a quest requires equipment, soul stones or elements to be DISCARDED, they are removed from the game immediately after the quest is completed. The quest card is revealed and the discarded equipment, soul stones and elements are placed on the mission card, since not only the quest but also the resources required for it are worth wisdom points.

Each quest card has a pictogram printed on it, showing the final requirements for the respective quest. A detailed description of the individual quests can be found on pages 23 and 24.



Animus Vorator (Soulreaper)

DISCARD 2 soul stones in Troquesia! The quest is completed as soon as the alchemist has discarded the 2 soul stones within one turn. The player keeps the wisdom points of the soul stones that he has discarded.

In the epic game, he needs a third stone, because he must have one himself after discarding.

Architectus Saxum (Master builder)

DISCARD 9 iron elements in Senex Ara! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist or a player's homunculus has discarded the 9 elements in the Senex Ara temple hex. All 9 elements must be in hex at the same time.

Custo Corporis (Bodyguard)

DISCARD 2 soul stones in front of the tower, that is farthest from your own tower! The quest is completed as soon as the alchemist has discarded the 2 soul stones in any hex adjacent to the opponent's tower within one turn. The player keeps the wisdom points of the soul stones that he has discarded.

In the epic game, he needs a third stone, because he must have one himself after discarding.



Custodis Turris (Homekeeper)

Place 3 homunculi (minimum level 2) around your tower and keep them until your next turn. The mission is accomplished as soon as the player's turn comes again and all 3 homunculi have survived on a hex adjacent to his tower.

Debellator Mare (Lord of the Seas)

Transmute 3 homunculi and place them in 3 different harbor towns! The mission is accomplished as soon as the third homunculus moves to the last open harbor town hex.

Dominus Ignis (Lord of Hellfire)

Burn down the city of Troquesia by DISCARDING 9 elements of fire in it! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist or a player's homunculus has discarded the 9 elements in the Troquesia town hex. All 9 elements must be in hex at the same time.

Donum Dator (Spender)

DISCARD 3 elements of platinum in front of the tower, that is farthest from your own tower! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist has discarded the 3 elements of platinum in a hex adjacent to the opponent's tower within one round. The player keeps the wisdom value of the discarded elements.

Elicius Fluctus (Meister*in des Wassers)

DISCARD 9 water elements in Tristigis! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist or a player's homunculus has discarded the 9 elements in the Tristigis harbor town hex. All 9 elements must be in hex at the same time.

Magister Arma (Armory Master)

Transmute 4 equipment items (minimum level 2) and DISCARD 2 of them in Gravit Muri! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist has discarded the 2 equipment cards in the Gravit Muri town hex. The player keeps the wisdom value of the discarded equipment cards.

Magnatus (Magnate)

Transmute 3 elements of gold and DISCARD them in Rudus Figor! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist or a player's homunculus has discarded the 3 elements in the Rudus Figor town hex within one round. The player keeps the wisdom value of the discarded elements.

Pacis Amans (Pacifist)

DISCARD 4 elements of water in any air mining hex! The player must not attack any Alchemist or homunculus throughout the entire game, but he may defend himself. The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist discards 4 water elements on an air mining hex. If he performs an attack in the further course of the game, the quest is considered to have failed.

Paganus Sacerdos (Cultist)

Transmute 3 homunculi and meet them in any earth mining hex! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist and three homunculi are standing in the same earth mining hex at the end of a turn.

Proditor Inquisitoris (Informer)

Accomplish 3 town quests, one each with wisdom value 1, 2, and 3. The quest is complete once the third quest is accomplished. Town quests with more than the required wisdom value may also be used.

Tropaeum Venator (Trophy Hunter)

Defeat 7 homunculi in battle during the game and keep the homunculi figures as trophies. You may also attack your own homunculi to complete the quest. The quest is completed when you have defeated the seventh homunculus.

Tyrannus (Tyrant)

Transmute 3 homunculi and place them in 3 different towns! The mission is accomplished as soon as the third homunculus moves to the last open town hex.

Sacerdotis Aqua (Water Sacristan)

Transmute 3 elements of aqua regia and DISCARD them on any earth mining hex! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist or a player's homunculus has discarded the 3 elements on any earth mining hex within one round. The player keeps the wisdom value of the discarded elements.

Sacrificium Naturae (Druid)

Transmute 4 equipment items (minimum level 2) and DISCARD 2 of them on any earth mining hex! The mission is accomplished as soon as the Alchemist has discarded the 2 equipment cards on any earth mining hex! The player keeps the wisdom value of the discarded equipment cards.

*A child sired by three fathers,
Light, dark, twilight.
Only in him all colors appear,
Fire, water, air, earth.*

Verse XVIII of Erringa 98, 123

Game Variants

Classic Game

The classic game ends when the first player reaches 25 or more wisdom points. The current round is played to the end, so that all players have had the same number of turns. It is possible that the player who has reached the 25 wisdom points falls back to fewer than 25 points after the last round is over, although the game still ends despite this. Afterwards, the score of the wisdom points is evaluated to determine who wins. By playing out the last round, it is possible that a different player wins than the one who first reached 25 or more points.

In the event of a tie, the player who has created a complete Philosopher's Stone takes the victory. If there is still a tie, the Alchemist who was able to fulfill his secret quest wins. If this also fails to determine a winner, the one with the most soul stones wins. If there is still a tie, the players share the corresponding ranking.

In order to familiarize yourself with the game mechanics and the different possibilities of *Materia Prima*, it is recommended to play the first couple of games with the classic variant. The playing time here is about 90 minutes.

Epic Game

The epic game ends immediately when the first player with a soul stone and a Philosopher's Stone fulfills his secret quest. This means that the player must have both a soul stone and a Philosopher's Stone at the moment when he fulfills his quest. In this game variant, there can only be one Alchemist who fulfills his secret quest. Afterwards, the score of the wisdom points is evaluated to determine who wins. The winner is the player who has the most wisdom points after the evaluation.

In case of a tie, the player who was able to complete his quest wins.

The epic game is aimed at experienced players who have internalized all of the mechanics and possibilities of *Materia Prima* and can free themselves from impossible dilemmas. Since there is no point limit in the epic game, the playing time depends on the players themselves.



Wisdom Value

Every Alchemist strives for perfection and to gain the deepest insight into the secrets of Alchemy. This insight is expressed in the wisdom value points that Alchemists receive through the conversion of elements, the transmutation of equipment and homunculi, the possession of a soul stone and the achievement of one's secret quest. However, the greatest insight into Alchemy is provided by the creation of the Philosopher's Stone, for which one also receives the most wisdom value points. The wisdom value points are added up at the end of the game. Homunculi that are eliminated in the course of the game are also scored at the end.

Example: Player 1 completes his quest and ends the game.

Elements	4
Homunculi	3
Philosopher's Stone	6
Stone set	5
No soul stone	-5
Secret quest	9
Wisdom value	22



Example: Player 2 receives the following points for his progress.

Elements	6
Homunculi	5
Philosopher's Stone	3
Equipment	5
Soul stone	6
Wisdom value	25

Scoring points

Points are awarded as indicated below:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Elements	-	-	2
Homunculi	1	2	3
Equipment	1	2	3
Philosopher's Stone	1	2	3
Philosopher's Stone set	5 (one time)		
Soul stone	3 (for each)		
No soul stone	-5 (one time)		
Tower extension	2 (for each)		
Secret quest	9 (one time)		
Town quest	X* (for each)		

* X represents the wisdom value points indicated in each case.

Actions

Moving



| Move to an adjoining hex!

Mining



| Get elements from a mine!

Discarding



| Drop elements on your hex!

Fighting



| Attack on an adjoining hex!



Converting



| Convert elements!

Transmuting



| Create homunculi or equipment!

Equipping



| Exchange elements and equipment!



Researching



| Acquire a new recipe (draw 2, choose 1)!

Purchasing



| Get an extension marker for your tower!

Sailing

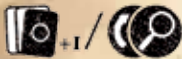


| Move to an adjoining harbor town hex!

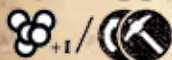
Abilities



Get one additional action per turn of the action displayed.



Draw four recipe cards with each research action and keep two of them.



Get one more element of the corresponding mine with each mining action.



Hold one more face down recipe card in your hand.



You do not have to be on a town hex to perform a research action.



You do not have to be on a tower hex to perform a transmute action.

Stats icons



| Number of dice on an attack roll



| Number of dice on a defensive roll



| Number of elements that a figure can carry



| Number of actions to be performed per turn

Elements



Water



Sulfur



Aqua Regia



Earth



Glass



Platinum



Air



Copper



Gold



Fire



Mercury



Iron

Townquests



Attack on the town hex and beat the defense value of the townquest card.



Drop the illustrated element on the town hex and remove the element from the game.



Move a homunculus to the town hex and remove the homunculus from the game.



Drop an equipment item and remove it from the game.



Drop a Philosopher's Stone fragment and remove it from the game.