

ASCENSION

GIFT OF THE ELEMENTS

The Elementals Have Awoken...

In the beginning, when the realms were young and unblemished by eons of strife, elementals roamed freely throughout the lands of Vigil. As humanity emerged, the elementals receded, hiding away from those that would use them as resources for their endless fighting. Eventually, they fell into a deep slumber, becoming indistinguishable from the world around them.

Now, as decades of turmoil have shaken New Vigil to its very core, the elementals have begun to awaken and reintroduce themselves to the world around them. The newly roused elementals roam the land, intent on discovering the unfamiliar world which they now find themselves a part of.

The factions have begun to study and learn from the elements, unlocking powerful new enhancements and abilities. There are still other elementals that have no lessons besides the chaos they sow, neither good nor evil, but destructive all the same. Wildfires burn across the plains, storms assault the cities, and floods wipe away countless lifetimes of work.

Malevolent forces of nature are not the only concern—amidst the turmoil, the mischievous gremlins have begun to grow in number, much to the annoyance of the rest of New Vigil's inhabitants. All the while, Xeron continues to watch from the shadows, biding his time until another opportunity to strike against his enemies presents itself.

Join the people of New Vigil as they attempt to discover the lessons of the elementals, and how to wield them, as they fight to protect their world against unseen forces.

New in ASCENSION

GIFT OF THE ELEMENTS

Empower

When you acquire a card with the Empower keyword, you may banish a card you have already played that turn. Cards with Empower allow players to make their deck better by simultaneously acquiring a card in the center row and getting rid of one of their weaker cards. Unlike when you banish a card from hand, you still get all effects from played cards that are banished.

Infest Monsters

When you defeat a Monster with Infest, you may choose a player and put that Monster into their discard pile instead of the void. When a Monster is drawn, it has no effect on its own, so this is a great way to mess up your opponent's draws. Be careful though, there are a few cards in *Ascension: Gift of the Elements™* that allow players to benefit from having Monsters in their deck.

Transforming Events

When an Event is flipped from the center deck, it does not take up a center row slot. Instead, it is placed in the Event Zone above or below the center row. While one of these Events is in play, it will have an ongoing effect that will change how the game plays out. There can never be more than one Event active at once. If a new Event appears, replace the current event and put it in the Void.

Events in *Ascension: Gift of the Elements™* may also be acquired! These Events include a cost in their effect that may be paid by any player during their turn, at which point the Event will leave play and transform into a powerful Hero for that player's deck.



Getting Started

In *Ascension: Gift of the Elements™*, players compete to wield the power of the elements. Starting with a small group of loyal but untrained followers, you acquire mighty Heroes and powerful Constructs to aid you in your quest to defeat evil Monsters and achieve victory.

Each turn, you will play cards to gain resources. These resources will allow you to acquire new Heroes and Constructs for your deck and defeat Monsters to earn rewards. At the end of the game, the player with the most Honor from cards they have acquired and Monster rewards is the winner.

CONTENTS

- 107 Center deck cards (including double-sided Transform cards)
- 4 Personal 10-card starting decks (8 Apprentice & 2 Militia)
- 41 Always available cards: 1 Cultist, 20 Mystic & 20 Heavy Infantry
- 10 Single-sided Transform cards
- 1 Game board
- 25 Clear 1-Honor tokens
- 25 Red 5-Honor tokens

SETUP

Ascension: Gift of the Elements™ can be played with 2-4 players on its own and can support up to 6 players with additional expansions. Team and single-player variant rules can be found on page 14.

Each player has a white-bordered starting deck consisting of eight Apprentices and two Militias. Everyone shuffles their starting deck and draws five cards (leaving five cards in their deck).

Take the silver-bordered Heavy Infantry, Mystic and Cultist cards and set them to the side in reach of all players. These cards represent characters in your kingdom and are always available to be acquired or defeated on your turn.

Shuffle all of the black-bordered cards together face down to form the center deck. From the center deck, flip six cards face up in a row between all players. This forms the center row. Place the center deck on one side of the center row, and reserve a space next to it for the void. When a Monster in the center row is defeated or any other card is banished, it goes to the void. (See “Game Layout” on Page 5).

Place 30 Honor tokens in the Honor pool for each player. Randomly determine which player goes first and proceed clockwise from there.

Number of Players	2	3	4
Total Honor Tokens	60 ★	90 ★	120 ★

Game Layout



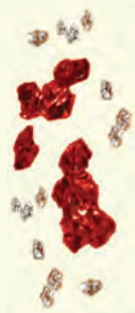
Always Available Cards
(Mystic, Heavy Infantry & Cultist)



Event Zone

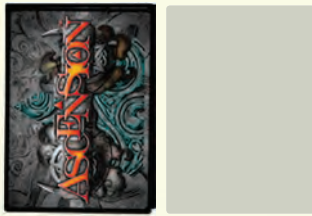


Center Row



Honor Pool

Center Deck



Void



Starting Hand (5 cards)
Starting Deck (remaining 5 cards)

Personal Deck
(10 cards: 8 Apprentice & 2 Militia)

Hero Cards

Heroes are the allies you acquire to aid you in your quest to protect the realm of New Vigil. You can play any number of Hero cards from your hand each turn. When you play a Hero from your hand, gain the effect listed on the card. It stays in front of you until the end of your turn, and then it goes to your discard pile.



The image shows a 'Water Elemental' Hero card. At the top, the name 'Water Elemental' is written in a stylized font, with a silver triangle containing the number '2' to its right. Below the name is an illustration of a blue, ethereal water elemental. Underneath the illustration is a blue-bordered box containing the text 'Enlightened Hero'. Below this box, the card's effect is written: 'Draw a card. If this is banished from anywhere during your turn, draw two cards.' At the bottom of the card, there is a yellow star with the number '1' inside, followed by a copyright notice and three white circles representing the card's rarity. A small flame icon is visible in the bottom right corner of the card's border.

Name

Cost
Number of Runes you must spend to acquire this card.

Faction
There are four different factions:

- Enlightened
- Lifebound
- Mechana
- Void

Effect
What the card does when played or in play.

Honor
How much Honor this card is worth.

Flavor Text
Flavor text has no game effect.

Rarity & Set Icon
Each ● represents a copy of the card in the center deck.

Construct Cards

Constructs are the many weapons, magical items, and fantastical devices you may acquire to use in your battles. Unlike Heroes, when you play a Construct, it stays in play and continues to help you turn after turn. However, they can also be destroyed by card effects (usually on Monster cards). When a Construct is destroyed, it is placed into your discard pile from play.

Name
Oblivion Blossoms

Cost
Number of Runes you must spend to acquire this card.

Faction
There are four different factions:
• Enlightened
• Lifebound
• Mechana
• Void

Effect
What the card does when played or in play.

Honor
How much Honor this card is worth.

Flavor Text
Flavor text has no game effect.

Rarity & Set Icon
Each ● represents a copy of the card in the center deck.

Card Text:
Void Construct
Once per turn, gain 1.
Once per turn, if you have banished a card, gain 1.

Card Details:
Rarity: 2 (star icon)
Set Icon: 3 (flame icon)

Monster Cards

Monsters represent the forces of evil that are trying to destroy the world of New Vigil. Whenever you defeat a Monster, banish it to the void and you get its reward immediately.

Defeating Monsters gives you rewards, including Honor, which is the victory condition of *Ascension: Gift of the Elements™*. When you earn Honor for defeating a Monster, simply collect the appropriate number of Honor tokens from the Honor Pool and place them in front of you.



The image shows a 'Wildfire Elemental' monster card. The card has a red and black border. At the top, the name 'Wildfire Elemental' is written in a stylized font, followed by a red circle containing the number '4'. The central illustration depicts a large, fiery monster with a human-like face, breathing fire in a forest setting. Below the illustration, the word 'Monster' is written in a decorative banner. The reward text reads: 'Reward: Gain 4★. Choose up to two cards in the center row and banish them.' Below the reward text is the flavor text: 'We don't need no water, let this wildfire burn.' At the bottom of the card, there are three small circles and a fire icon. The card is surrounded by callout boxes explaining its various components.

Name

Cost
Amount of Power you must spend to defeat this card.

Reward
What this monster does when defeated.

Flavor Text
Flavor text has no game effect.


Rarity & Set Icon
Each ● represents a copy of the card in the center deck.

Event Cards

Event cards are global effects that alter the rules of the game for every player. When an Event card flips into the Center Row, immediately move it to the Event zone on the board, and then replace it in the Center Row. There may only be one Event in the Event zone at any time. If a new Event flips into the Center Row, the old Event goes to the Void and the new Event becomes the current Event. Special Abilities that reference the Center Row do not apply to Events.

The Events in *Ascension: Gift of the Elements™* are special Events that have the ability to be Transformed. A player may pay the cost indicated in the Event's text to remove the Event from the Event zone and acquire the Transform Hero indicated in the Event's text to their discard pile.

Name



Effect
What rules this Event applies to all players.

Enlightened Event
Once per turn, if you have played a Mystic or Heavy Infantry, draw a card.
Pay 8: Transform this into Dhartha, Eternal Seer and acquire it.

Rarity & Set Icon
Each ● represents a copy of the card in the center deck.

Setup Reminder: Multiple versions of each of the Events and their corresponding Transform cards are included in your copy of *Ascension: Gift of the Elements™*— one version with each of the different cards on two sides of the same card, and one version with individual copies of each card with the Ascension back. The two-sided versions allow you to simply flip the card over when it transforms, while the separate cards are available for players who choose to play without sleeves. If you choose to play with the separate cards, set the original version aside until the end of the game. It is not considered to be in the void. When counting your score at the end of the game, add only the Honor value of the version of the card that was in your deck when the game ended.

Gameplay

General Rules

At any time, if your personal deck is empty and you need to draw a card or reveal a card from the top of your deck, reshuffle your discard pile to replenish your deck. If the center deck runs out, reshuffle the void to replenish it.




Hero cards played during your turn go into the discard pile at the end of your turn. (In other words, don't reshuffle Hero cards you've played this turn if you need to reshuffle your discard pile in the middle of your turn.)



Cards you acquire during your turn are placed in your discard pile.





Whenever a card leaves the center row, replace it immediately from the center deck. This happens before anything else occurs. Any time a player is making a decision, the center row should be full.

Many cards will have text that contradicts these rules. If card text ever contradicts these rules, follow the card text instead.




Turn Breakdown

1. Play cards from your hand to gain Runes () , Power () , and Honor (). Acquire Heroes and Constructs, and put them in your discard pile for future turns. Defeat Monsters for rewards and Honor.
2. Place played Hero cards and cards in your hand in your discard pile at the end of your turn.
3. Draw five cards from your personal deck.

To play a Hero card from your hand, simply place the card face up in front of you, announce its effect, and follow the instructions on the card. Any choices required by the card must be made at that time and any conditionals must be met for additional effects, though any  or  generated can be spent until the end of your turn. You do not have to pay any costs to play Heroes from your hand.

Example: *Innovative Aspirant*, "Gain  and . When you play *Innovative Aspirant*, you gain the  and  immediately, but you do not have to spend them immediately.

Constructs are played just like Heroes, except Constructs remain in play and can be used every turn. If a Construct has multiple abilities, each one may be used.

Example: *Oblivion Blossoms* says, "Once per turn, gain . Once per turn, if you have banished a card, gain . You may choose to gain  at the beginning of your turn, and still use the second ability later in the same turn.

Acquiring Heroes and Constructs

You need Runes (▲) to acquire Heroes and Constructs. Runes come from Heroes played from your hand or from Constructs you have in play. You may acquire any number of cards as long as you have enough Runes. To find out how many Runes you get from a card, look in the text box of the card. If a card provides Runes, there will be a Rune icon with a number.

You may acquire any Hero or Construct in the center row as well as Mystics and Heavy Infantry, which are always available. When you acquire a card, place it in your discard pile and replace the card in the center row with the top card of the center deck.

Defeating Monsters

To defeat a Monster, a player must have enough Power (generated by cards with ⚔ in their text box—e.g., Heavy Infantry). The amount of Power a card generates is found in its game text box represented by the Power icon with a number.

The Defeat Cost of a Monster is listed in the upper-right corner of the card. This cost has a Power icon behind it.

When you defeat a Monster, you gain a Reward. Most rewards include Honor, and how much Honor you gain is equal to the number indicated on the Honor symbol (★). If the Monster has another effect as part of its reward, that effect occurs immediately after the card is replaced in the center row.

After defeating a Monster, place it in the void and replace it in the center row. You may defeat any number of Monsters as long as you have enough Power.

The Cultist is always available to defeat and is never banished to the void. There is no limit to how many times you can defeat the Cultist in one turn.



Innovative Aspirant costs 1 Rune to acquire.



You gain 1 Rune & 1 Power playing it.



Wildfire Elemental requires 4 Power to defeat.

Heavy Infantry generates 2 Power.





Banishing Cards

Some cards allow you to banish cards in either the center row or your own deck. When a card tells you to banish from the center row, put the card into the void, then place the top card of the center deck into the center row. If a card instructs you to banish multiple cards from the center row, place all of those cards into the void, then put that many cards from the center deck into the center row.

When a card tells you to banish a card in your hand and/or your discard pile, you may put a card from that zone into the void. If a card allows you to banish a card in your hand, you may not banish a card that you've already played that turn, as that card is no longer in your hand. Banishing your weaker cards allows you to draw your more powerful cards more frequently, so make sure to banish your Apprentice and Militia cards whenever you get the opportunity.

Ending Your Turn

After you are done playing cards from your hand, acquiring Heroes and Constructs, and defeating Monsters, place any remaining cards in your hand and any Heroes played during your turn into your discard pile. You lose all unspent  and .

Draw five cards to replenish your hand. If you run out of cards in your deck and need to draw more, simply reshuffle your discard pile into your deck. When you end your turn, play passes clockwise around the table.

Game End

The game ends when a certain amount of Honor has been earned, based on the number of players.

Number of Players	2	3	4
Total Honor Tokens	60 ★	90 ★	120 ★

Set this much Honor aside in Honor tokens before starting the game. When the final Honor token is earned, the game ends at the end of the current round (after the last player to start the game takes a turn). Thus, each player will play the same number of turns during the course of the game. Players can still gain Honor even when the set number of Honor tokens is gone. Use additional Honor tokens left over to track any Honor earned by players before the game ends.

Cards in each player's deck are also worth Honor, indicated by the number in the Honor symbol (★) on the bottom left corner of the card. When the game is over, count the Honor from Heroes and Constructs (this includes your hand, deck, discard pile, and played Constructs), along with all Honor tokens acquired during the game. The player with the most total Honor is the winner!

If multiple players have the same number of Honor Points, the last player to start wins (i.e., the starting player loses all ties, the second player loses to third and fourth, etc.).

F.A.Q.

Q: When I play Flourishing Druidess while I control Temple of Heroes, do I check if I have the most Honor before or after I use Temple of Heroes?

A: Before. You check if you have the most Honor the moment you play Flourishing Druidess.

Q: Do Monsters in play as Mechana Constructs have any abilities? What happens if Cell Block E is destroyed?

A: Monsters have no abilities unless another card grants it to them. If Cell Block E is destroyed, all Monsters you control in play are destroyed as well.

Q: Are Events considered in the center row? Can I banish them with a card like Yuk Tribe Outcast?

A: No. As soon as an Event card flips from the center deck, it leaves the center row and goes to the Event zone.

Q: If I play a Construct like Piercing Eye, Wildbark Mail or Madness' Embrace after I have defeated a Monster that turn, can I still gain the effect of the Construct?

A: Yes. As long as you have met the conditions of the Construct that turn, you can use the Construct even if you put it into play after the condition was met.

Q: What cards are considered to have been played for effects like Empowered and Venom Priestess.

A: When your turn starts, cards are in your hand. Once you remove them from your hand and gain their effect, they are considered played. Played cards go to your discard pile at the end of your turn.

Q: When you use the effect of P.R.I.M.E Directive, do players finish the last cycle of turns or does the game just end?

A: The game ends, with the player who used the effect of P.R.I.M.E Directive as the winner.

Glossary

Banish: When a card is banished, it is placed in the void pile. Always Available cards and starting deck cards do not go to the void when banished. Starting deck cards are set aside outside the game and always available cards are put back in their appropriate Always Available zone when banished.

Constructs: Constructs are the many weapons, magical items, and fantastical devices you may acquire to use in your battles. After you play a Construct from your hand, you can gain an effect from it every turn it remains in play.

Destroy: Destroy means to put into the discard pile from play and generally refers to Constructs.

Empowered: Cards with the **Empowered** keyword allow the player acquiring them to banish a card that they have played that turn as part of their acquisition.

Event: Events represent global effects that change the power structure of the world, and change the rules of the game for all players for as long as they remain in play.

Heroes: Heroes are the allies you can acquire to aid you in your quest to save the realm of New Vigil. When you play a Hero from your hand, you gain the effect listed on the card, and then it goes to your discard pile at the end of your turn.

Honor (★): Honor is the key to victory in Ascension. Whoever earns the most Honor wins the game.

Monsters: Monsters are the minions of Deofol that are trying to conquer New Vigil. Defeating Monsters gives you rewards, including Honor that wins you the game.

Ongoing: After a card with **Ongoing** is acquired or defeated, it remains in front of you and its effect is permanent unless banished.

Power (🔴): Power is one of the two main resources in the world of Ascension. Power is used to defeat Monsters and earn rewards.


Runes (⚡): Runes are one of the two main resources in the world of Ascension. Runes are used to acquire Heroes and Constructs so you can add them to your deck.

Trophy: Trophy is an additional reward on some Monsters. When you defeat a Monster with a Trophy effect, gain the Honor reward immediately and put it face-up in play in front of you. You may banish it for its effect immediately or save it for a future turn.

Unite: Cards with the **Unite** keyword have additional effects that occur if you play them in the same turn as other Heroes that share the same faction.

Gameplay Variants

Team Rules (4-6 Players in teams of 2)

- Set aside 30 Honor tokens per player.
- Teammates sit across from one other.
- Your teammate is not harmed by the rewards from any Monsters you defeat (e.g. if you kill a Tectonic Thrasher, your teammate does not have to destroy a Construct they control).
- You may spend one additional  when you acquire a card to add that card to your teammate's deck instead of yours.
- At the end of the game, combine your Honor total with that of your teammate's to determine the winning team!

Solitaire Rules (1 Player)

- Set aside 50 Honor tokens.
- Lay out the center row as normal, but whenever a card leaves the center row, the replacement card always enters on the left-hand side and the remaining cards slide over to the right.
- You take the first turn of the game. At the end of each of your turns, the Cult is considered to acquire or defeat the two cards furthest to the right in the center row.
- All cards acquired by the Cult are set aside and only used to determine its Honor total at the end of the game.
- Any Monsters defeated by the cult go to the void, and the Cult receives any Honor from their reward. All other effects are ignored.
- Continue playing this way until the last Honor token is gone, then compare your score to the total Honor earned by the Cult. If you have more Honor, you win!

Credits

Ascension™ Game Engine Design

Justin Gary

Ascension: Gift of the Elements™ Lead Design

Justin Gary

Design & Development Team

Justin Gary, Gary Arant, Ben Lundquist,
Nick Fiorillo

Creative Direction & Graphic Design

Ryan O'Connor

Card Art

Aaron Nakahara, Eric Sabee

Additional Graphic Design

Peter Gifford