Rulebook

W·A·V·E·S

Components

Elder cards

| 20 Scholars | 20 Keepers | 20 Knights | 20 Seers | 20 Nobles |

Tokens

| 1 | 5 |
| Wave token | Shells |

Council cards

| 2 players | 4 players | 6 players |

Seating order

Waves can be enjoyed by 2, 4 or 6 players who will split into two teams of equal sizes. At **2 players,** consult page 14-15 for the differences in setup and gameplay.

At 4 and 6 players, every player takes a seat between 2 opponents, as indicated on the back of the council cards.

Overview

Players are the leaders of the most powerful Houses of Atlantis. You are constantly competing for control of this magestic city. The best way to reach this goal, is by gaining influence with the **Council of Elders**.

During the game, you will play cards called **Agents,** who will try to persuade these **Elders** to support your interests. Knowing which Agents to play and in what manner is key to succes.

Strategic communication with your team is crucial. You will have to consider player order and the number of available **Ceremonial Shells**. But above all, you must work together to get the Council to put forth the **Rule Tablet** that works in your favor!

Setup

A Find the **Council card** for your player count and place it face up near the center of the table.

B Shuffle the **Elder cards** into a facedown draw pile. Deal 5 cards to each player and place the rest within reach of everyone.

C Draw one card from the draw pile for each player and place it face-up in front of them. Move these cards close together to form the Council of Elders.

D Pick a random player to receive the **Wave token.**

E Place the **5 Rule Tablets** near the rest.

For your first game, use the sides depicted in the image on the right. Choose which tablets and sides to use in subsequent games.

F Place the **5 Ceremonial Shells** within reach.

Example: set-up for 4 players

① Scholars
All Scholars have 6 Power
(instead of 1)

6

② Keepers
Agents need an equal or lower power to collect Elders

③ Knights

④ Seers
Rotate Elders one player counterclockwise

⑤ Nobles

E

A

C

F

D

B

Each player receives 5 cards

5

Terms

Elder

The card that is face-up in front of you is referred to as your **Elder**. All **Elders** in play form the **Council of Elders.**
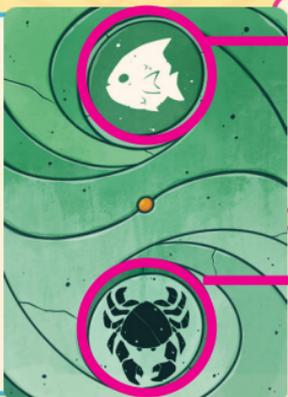
Class & Power

Elders come in 5 different classes, with Power 1 through 5. **Power can be changed by Rule Tablets**

Agent

Each round, you will play one or more cards face down at the **Elder** in front of you. Cards played from your hand are referred to as **Agents**.
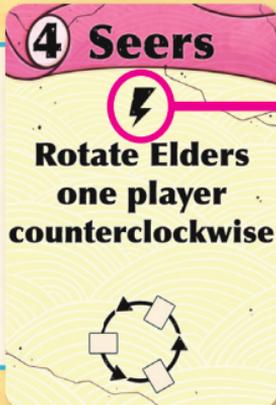
Followers

Agents can be played as Followers, represented by the Fish icon.

Breakers

Agents can also be played as Breakers, represented by the Crab icon.

Rule Tablet

In each round, one Rule Tablet will be active.

Elders and Breakers influence which Tablet will be activated.

Seers

Rotate Elders one player counterclockwise

Direct

Rules with the lightning symbol should be applied directly.

All others are active during the Waves.

Both teams try to be the first to collect a set number of Elders. As soon as this happens, the game ends immediately.

- Either collect *all 5 different Elders*:

- Or collect *7 Elders in total* (any combination of cards):

Designate one player per team who collects all the Elders open in front of them, so the progress of both teams can easily be tracked.

Gameplay

Waves is played over a number of rounds, consisting of the following phases.

Open Majority - placing shells

At the start of each round, determine which class of Elder has the majority in the current Council. Simply observe which class has the most cards. Ties for most are broken in favor of the class with the highest Power. Then, consult the Council card to determine how many Shells should be placed in the center of the Council.

Example: Open Majority

The Open Majority of this Council goes to the Seers [4].
2 Shells are placed in the center of the Council.

Playing Agents

Starting with the player holding the **Wave Token** and going clockwise around the table, players take turns placing one or more Agents from their hand facedown at the **Elder** in front of them.

You can play **Agents** in 2 ways:

- As a **Follower**. To do so, place one card from your hand beneath the Elder in front of you, with the Fish icon upright.

- As a **Breaker**. To do so, place any number of cards **from the same class** partially over your Elder. Obscure the Elder's Fish icon with the Agent's Crab icon. Make sure the other players can see how many cards you've played.

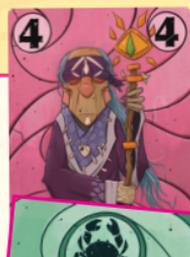Note: you can never play **Agents** at another player's **Elder**.

Play as a
Follower

Followers get the first opportunity to collect Elders

Play as a
Breaker

Breakers influence the Council's rules

Rules of communication

Each round, players are allowed to openly communicate with their team, until they have played their **Agent(s)**. After that, they may not communicate in any way until the end of this phase.

True Majority - breaking rules

After the last player placed their Agent(s), all Breaker Agents are revealed. Follower Agents are kept facedown.

After this reveal, determine which class has True Majority now, from all the cards open on the table. Look at all the Elders and Breaker Agents. In case of a tie, the majority goes to the class with the highest Power.

Take the Rule Tablet associated with the class that has True Majority and place it close to the Council. This is the active rule for this round.

If the active rule conflicts with a base rule, always follow the active rule.

Example: True Majority

1 Scholars

All Scholars have 6 Power (instead of 1)

6

After revealing the Breaker Agents, it turns out the True Majority in the Council is held by the 3 Scholars.
The Tablet associated with the Scholars is placed near the center of the table, to indicate that it is active.

Discard extra Breakers

Extra Breaker Agents only help to obtain majority and force a specific rule. After establishing majority, extra Breaker Agent cards are discarded, face up, until **each player has just one Agent card left**. Keep covering the Fish icon on the Elder card as a reminder that you played a Breaker.

1st Wave - Followers collect

Starting from the player who holds the Wave token and going clockwise around the table, the players who played their Agent as follower, flip over their card and check if they collect their **Elder**.

Elders are collected when:

1. There is still at least one **Shell token** available in the Council.
2. The **Agent** has a higher Power than the **Elder**.
3. The active Rule Tablet allows you to collect your **Elder**.

If your team collects an **Elder**, remove a **Shell token** from the center of the Council. Keep the Elders face up in front of one of the team's players.

If you **do not collect your Elder**, take the card into your hand instead.

Note! If the holder of the Wave token played a Breaker, they are skipped in the first Wave.

2nd Wave - Breakers collect

After all the Followers took their turn, the Breaker players will now have a chance to collect their **Elder**. Start again from the player holding the Wave token and go clockwise around the table.

The same rules for collecting **Elders** apply.

Example: Collecting Elders

1 Scholars

All Scholars have 6 Power (instead of 1)

6

The Scholars have True majority, so this is the active Rule

1st Wave: Followers

*The first Follower Agent is a **Knight** [3].*

*Because of the current rule, the **Scholar** has a Power of **6**, so the Agent's Power is not high enough to collect the **Elder**. The **Elder** is taken into the player's hand.*

*The second Follower Agent is a **Noble** [5].*

*Neither **Agent**, nor **Elder** is affected by the current Rule. So the **Elder** with Power [4] is collected and a Shell is removed from the Council.*

2nd Wave: Breakers

*The first Breaker Agent is a **Scholar** [1].*

*Because of the active Rule, the **Scholar** now has **6 Power**. So it collects the **Elder** [4] in front of them. The second, and final Shell is removed.*

*The second Breaker Agent is a **Knight** [3]*

*This **Agent** has more power than the **Elder** [2]. However, there are no Shells left in the Council, so the **Elder** is not collected and is taken back into the player's hand.*

Preparing a new round

- Move the Wave token to the next player in clockwise order.
- Each player draws 1 card from the deck.
- All players discard down to 5 cards in hand. Cards are always discarded face up.
- The Agents that were played this round now become the new **Elders.** Move them close together to form the **Council** for the next round.
- The Rule Tablet is no longer active. It can be placed back with the rest.

Continue with a new round.

Players may openly communicate up to the end of their turn. Once their Agents are played, they may no longer communicate in any way.

If you do not collect your Elder, take the card into your hand instead

If you have played multiple Breaker Agents, you will likely have to play the next round(s) with less cards in your hand.

Changes at 2 players

When playing Waves with 2 player, there are some changes in **Set-up** and **Gameplay**. The phases: Open Majority, True Majority and Collecting remain the same, as does the goal of the game.

Set-up

Draw 2 cards from the draw pile for each player. One player places both cards in a vertical line, facing them. The other places their cards in a horizontal line, facing them.

Player B

Player A

Select a random player to go first. Their opponent places the Wave token at one of the two Elders of the starting player. Each player draws 5 cards in hand like normal.

Gameplay

Open Majority: placing shells - see page 8

Playing Agents

- The player who has the Wave token starts by playing their Agent(s) at one of the two Elders facing them, either as a Follower or as a Breaker (see page 9). Then their opponents does the same at one of their Elders.

- Both players draw 2 cards from the draw pile.

- The owner of the Wave token now plays Agents at their second Elder, followed by their opponent who does the same.

Breaking rules - see page 10

Collecting: 1st and 2nd Wave - see page 11

Preparing a new round

Don't draw new cards. Discard to 5 cards in hand if you need to. Move the Wave token to the next Elder in clockwise order.
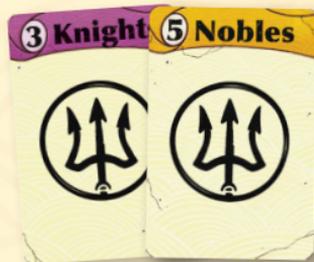
Deep dive: Rule Tablets

Beginner: Calm Tablets

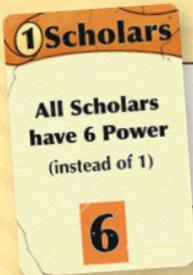The Tablets for the Knights and the Nobles have 1 side without any text.
If these Tablets are active on a round, there are no special rules that apply.

Use these for your first game(s) to lower the game's complexity.

Base Tablets

All Tablets with a black title have a medium complexity. Simply decide as a group which side you want to use for your game.

All Scholars, both **Elder** and **Agent**, have 6 Power instead of 1 this round.
This means **Elder Scholars** cannot be scored.

This round, your Agent needs to have a Power equal to or lower than the Elder in order to collect it.

This round, all **Breaker Agents** collect **Elders** in the first Wave. **Follower Agents** collect Elders in the second Wave.
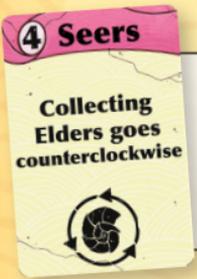
③ Knights

⚡

Elders have the Power of the Elder to their right

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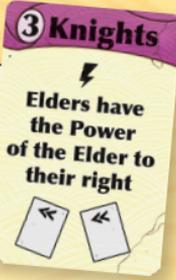
Your Elder has their Power changed to the Power printed on the Elder to its right. Determine this before cards are collected.

④ Seers

⚡

Rotate Elders one player counterclockwise
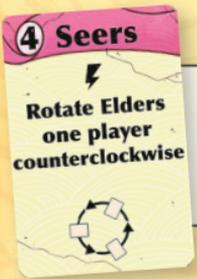
The **Elder** in front of each player is placed in front of the player to their right. The **Agents** remain with their owner.

④ Seers

**Followers have -2 Power**

-2

Follower Agents have their Power decreased by 2.

④ Seers

Collecting Elders goes counterclockwise

Starting with the player holding the Wave token, both Waves continue with the player to their right, instead of the player to their left.

⑤ Nobles

First collected Elder is returned to the hand instead

✋

The first time an Elder would be collected this round, that Elder is returned to the player's hand instead. Don't remove a Shell.

⑤ Nobles

You cannot collect Elders you already have
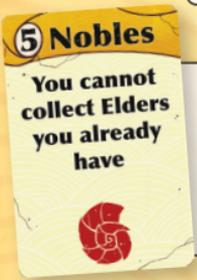
If you or your team already has collected a copy of the **Elder** in front of you, you cannot collect it. Even if that copy was acquired this round.

Advanced Tablets

Each Class has one side with a white title on their Rule Tablet. These offer a bit more complexity in gameplay than their counterparts. It is recommended that these sides are not used when playing with players unfamiliar with Waves.

① Scholars

Followers have 3 Power
Rebels have 6 Power

Instead of their original Power, every **Agent** played as a **Follower** has 3 Power. Every **Breaker** has 6 Power.

② Keepers

All Keepers have +2 Power for each Shell left in the Council

All Keepers, both **Elders** and **Agents**, have their Power increased by 2 for every Shell currently in the Council. Their Power drops as Shells are removed.

③ Knights

Agents have the Power of the Agent to their right

The Power of your **Agent** is equal to the number printed on the Agent card of the player your right. Reveal that Agent card if needed.

④ Seers

Only Unique Elders can be collected

You can only collect your **Elder** if there are no other Elders of the same class in the Council at the start of the round. Disregard open Agent cards for this.

⑤ Nobles

Set the amount of Shells to the amount of Followers

Add or remove Shell tokens until there are as many as there are Followers this round. This will be zero if every player played a Breaker.

Rule Tablet suggestion

While any combination of Rule Tablets works for any game, here are some suggestions for different player counts.

1 vs 1

①Scholars	②Keepers	③ Knights	④ Seers	⑤ Nobles
All Scholars have 6 Power *(instead of 1)*	Agents need an equal or lower power to collect Elders	Rebels collect Elders first, Followers second	Followers have -2 Power	You cannot collect Elders you already have

2 vs 2

①Scholars	②Keepers	③ Knights	④ Seers	⑤ Nobles
All Scholars have 6 Power *(instead of 1)*	Agents need an equal or lower power to collect Elders	Agents have the Power of the Agent to their right	Rotate Elders one player counterclockwise	Set the amount of Shells to the amount of Followers

3 vs 3

①Scholars	②Keepers	③ Knights	④ Seers	⑤ Nobles
All Scholars have 6 Power *(instead of 1)*	All Keepers have +2 Power for each Shell left in the Council	Rebels collect Elders first, Followers second	Collecting Elders goes counterclockwise	First collected Elder is returned to the hand instead

Round overview

1. Place Shells
based on **Open Majority**

2. Play Agents
as either **Followers** or **Breakers**

Turns go clockwise, starting with the Wave token holder

Follower   **Breaker**

3. Reveal Breaker Agents
and activate **Rule Tablet** based on **True Majority**

4. Followers collect first, then Breakers

if there is still a **Shell** available..

..Agent has more Power than the **Elder**..

..and the active **Rule Tablet** allows it

5. End round
- Wave token moves clockwise
- Each player draws a card
- Discard down to 5 cards
- Agents become new Elders

20