

# Starlight

by Rick Holzgrafe  
1 - 5 players, 90 - 120 mins.  
Draft Rev 08 - Mar 20, 2022

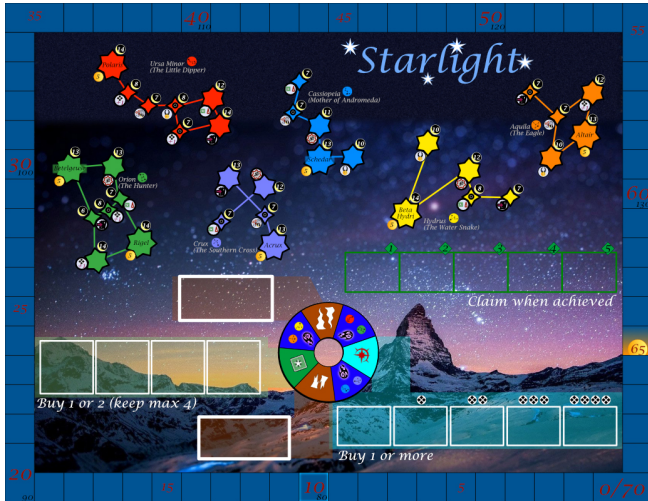
You and your fellow gods stand atop Starkindle Mountain, and you are forging the stars themselves and launching them into the heavens to form the constellations! You will gain victory points for each star you launch, and bonus victory points for enhancing your stars and accomplishing special achievements along the way. The god who launches the finest and most resplendent stars will be honored and remembered forever!

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*See the separate Setup sheet for instructions on setting up the game.*

# Components



Sky Board



2 Draw Bags

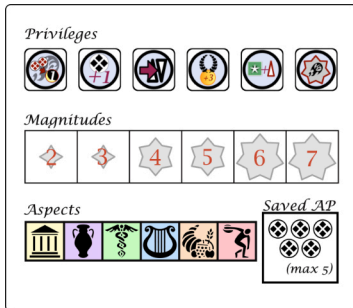


First Player Marker

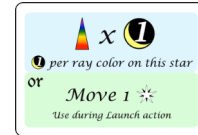
## Cards



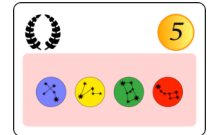
Player Markers (~30 per player)



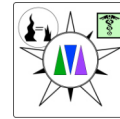
5 Player Mats



35 Flares



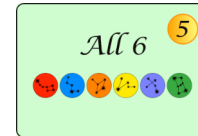
43 Laurels



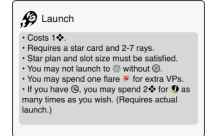
48 Cores



8 Starters



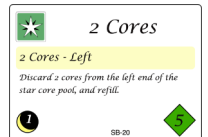
5 Accolades



5 Player Aids



10 Gods



28 Starbots



48 Long and 48 Short Rays,  
in six colors

# Live and Starbot Players

Up to five players can play Starlight together. The more players in the game, the tighter and more competitive the play will be.

If you have fewer players than you'd like, you can add *Starbots* to the game. A Starbot player is an automated player controlled by the deck of Starbot cards. Starbot players take a turn each round the same as the live players, but they behave differently. Starbot players collect victory points and can win the game if they collect more than the live players do.

You can play with as few as one live player, and add as many Starbots to the game as you'd like (up to a combined total of 5 live and Starbot players) to increase the difficulty of play to suit your taste.

See **Starbot Play** on page 13 for details on using Starbots. If you choose not to use Starbots in your game, put the Starbot deck back in the box; you won't need it.

## The Gods

Before starting play, decide whether or not you will be using the God cards. They are optional, but either all players should have a God card, or none.

Each God card is different, and gives its owner special powers (and in some cases, special restrictions). The powers and restrictions on your God card take precedence over the standard rules.

If you use them, deal two God cards at random to each player during setup. Each player must examine their God cards, and choose one to keep and one to discard. The one you keep is yours for the entire game. Announce it to the other players, and place it face-up on the table in front of you for easy reference.

See the **Starlight Card Almanac** for details about the individual God cards.



# Basics of Play

Players take turns in clockwise order, beginning with the Start Player.

Your goal is to build and launch stars. Although launching stars is the only way to gain victory points, you can gain bonus victory points by enhancing your stars with Flares, by using the privileges you earn, and by fulfilling Laurels and Accolades.



## Using the Rondel



The rondel on the Sky Board shows the actions you can take during the game. On your first turn, you will place one of your markers on any of the seven Action Spaces on the rondel, and then take that action.

On all subsequent turns you must move your marker (which should be where you left it at the end of your previous turn) clockwise on the rondel before taking any action, and you may optionally take the action of each space as you step onto it. You may not take an action without moving first, and you may take each action at most once before moving on.



## Action Points

On each turn, you will receive 5 Action Points  to spend. (During the game, you may be able to increase this to 6.) Each step on the rondel costs 1 . If you choose to take an action, that also will cost action points; see **Actions** on page 7 for a description of the costs and effects of the actions.

**Important:** If an opponent's marker is on an action space, it will cost you 1  extra to take the action. This is called the "occupation surcharge". Pay only 1  extra even if there are multiple other markers present.


There are no tokens for Action Points. If you wish, use your markers to keep track of how many you have spent as you play. Action Points are never paid to other players; they just vanish when spent.

After resolving any action you may continue to move and take further actions. Your turn is over either when you choose to end your turn, or when you have no more action points to spend.

You may save up to 5 unspent  in the "Saved AP" box on your player mat, by putting one of your markers there for each saved . If you have more than 5 left unspent, the remainder are lost.

When your turn is over, refill all pools that need it.

## Your First Turn

Your first turn differs from the rest. Place your marker on any action space you like, to take that action. You may take only that action, and you receive only 2  to spend on the action. You do not pay any occupation surcharge, even if other players' markers are there.

## Victory Points

There are two kinds of victory points. *Night points* are scored during the game; *Day points* are scored during final scoring at the end of the game. The winner will be the player with the most total points (night + day).



*Night and Day Points.*

# Launching Stars


Each star is made of one Core card, and from 2 to 7 rays. Rays do not have to be attached to stars until you decide to launch; at that time you may choose which and how many of your rays to attach to the star.

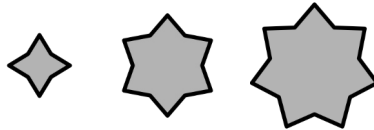
When you have a star ready to launch, you'll choose an appropriate *destination slot* for it. The slots are the star shapes in the constellations on the Sky Board. When you launch a star to a slot, place one of your markers in the slot.

## Slot Sizes and Magnitudes

The number of rays you attach to a star is called the *magnitude* of the star. There are three sizes of star slot on the Sky Board. Small slots may host only stars of magnitude 2 or 3; medium slots host magnitudes 4 or 5; and large slots host magnitudes 6 or 7.

Your player mat shows the six different magnitudes, and the shape of the appropriate star slot for each.

**Important:** You may not launch into a large slot unless you have acquired the **Launch Alpha Star**  privilege. (See **Privileges** on page 10.)

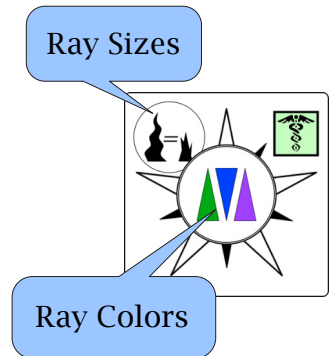


*Small, medium, and large (alpha) star slots.*

## Completed Stars and Plans

Each Core has a *plan*, shown by icons on the card. Each plan has two parts, one showing the permissible ray colors, and the other showing the required ray sizes.

A star is *complete* when it has at least 2 but no more than 7 rays, all matching the Core's plan for ray colors and sizes. The number of rays is up to you, but will affect the available destination slots for your star.




Pre-printed Ray



**Your Starter Core** has a pre-printed ray that counts like a regular ray, so you can launch with one fewer purchased ray than usual. You may use any sizes of ray with your Starter Core, without restriction. Starter Cores have no Aspect.


## Choosing a Destination Slot

Your destination slot must be empty, and appropriately sized. If the constellation has no stars yet, you must choose a slot marked with the "target" icon . Otherwise you must choose a slot that is directly connected with a filled slot, as shown by the connecting lines on the Sky Board.

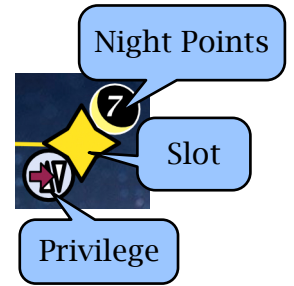
## Launching a Star, step by step

1. **Ensure that your star is *complete*.** Now is when you must choose which rays to use for this launch. Your star must have 2 to 7 rays, all of which match the Core's specifications for size and color.
2. **Select a destination slot** in either of the two constellations displayed on the Launch action space. Your star's magnitude must match the slot's size. The slot must be empty. If the entire constellation is empty, the slot must display the ☉ icon; otherwise the slot must be connected to a filled slot.

You must have the **Launch Alpha Star**  privilege to launch to a large slot.

3. **Pay 1** . This is the cost of the Launch action.
4. **Place one of your markers** in the destination slot.
5. **Score victory points:** You receive night points as shown on your destination slot, plus night points for a Flare if you used one for that purpose.

If you have the **Buy Night Points on Launch**  privilege, you may now spend action points to purchase more night points, at a cost of 2  per .

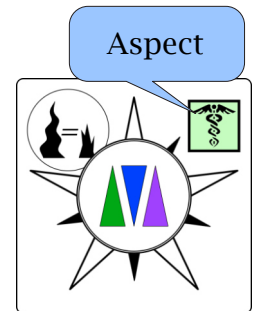


6. **Record a new privilege.** Most slots have an associated privilege. Place one of your markers on that privilege on your player mat, unless you already have that privilege. (See **Privileges** on page 10 for details.)

7. **Record a new magnitude.** Place one of your markers on your player mat for the magnitude of your star, if you have not already launched a star of that magnitude.

8. **Record a new Aspect.** Place one of your markers on your player mat for the Aspect of your Core, if you have not already launched a star with that Aspect.

9. **Discard** your Core and return your star's rays to their appropriate grab bags (do not mix long and short rays in the same bag). If you used any Flares, keep them but turn them face-down.



 Your player aid has a summary of this information on one side.

## Star Plans

<p>Four circular icons, each containing four rays of different colors: (1) orange, green, purple, yellow; (2) red, yellow, blue, orange; (3) green, purple, blue, orange; (4) red, yellow, blue, orange.</p>	<p><b>Color Schemes</b> Only rays of the displayed colors can be used. You do not have to use all of the colors.</p>
<p>Three circular icons, each containing three rays of different sizes: (1) a long ray and two short rays with a red 'X' over them; (2) a long ray and two short rays with a red 'X' over them; (3) a long ray and two short rays with an equals sign between them.</p>	<p><b>Ray Patterns</b> Only rays of the specified sizes can be used. In the case of "equal sizes" with an odd number of rays, you must come as close as possible, for example by using 3 long and 2 short rays.</p>

# Actions


The seven rondel spaces and their actions are described here. (Remember that taking any action is always optional.)


In addition to your movements and actions, on any turn you may spend any number of Flares to use their boons. (See **Flares** on page 11). When you do, turn each used Flare face-down. You may not use them again, but they may count for bonus victory points at the end of the game.

**Note:** The privileges that you acquire during the game can affect how actions work. See page 10 for details about privileges.



## Gain Cores


Take up to 2 Cores from the Core pool, for 1  each. Place them face-up on the table in front of you.

You may also flush the pool (discard all cards from the pool and refill the pool from the deck) by paying 1  each time you do so. You may not refill the pool during your action except by paying to flush the pool.

When your action is complete, refill the pool as needed until it again contains three face-up cards. Their order within the pool does not matter.

If the deck of Cores is ever empty, immediately refill it by turning the discards face down and shuffling them.



**If you have the Core + Ray privilege**, you may also take one ray per Core that you take. For each Core, choose any ray from either the Long Ray or the Short Ray pool. Do not refill the ray pools until the end of your turn, unless you also have the Refill Rays privilege .



You do not have to attach your rays to any particular Core when you choose them. Rays are attached only when a star is launched.

You may keep at most 4 Cores at a time, and you may not discard your Cores until they are launched. This means that once you have 4 Cores, you may not take more until you have launched some.

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## Gain Rays



Take as many rays from the associated pool (either the Long or the Short ray pool) as you wish, at a cost of 1  per ray. You may also flush the pool (discard all rays from the pool and refill the pool from the bag) by paying 1  each time you do so. You may not refill the pool during your action except by paying to flush the pool, unless you have the Refill Rays privilege.

There is no limit to the number of rays you may take and keep. Your rays do not have to match any of your Cores, and do not have to be attached to any star until you are ready to launch.




**If you have the Refill Rays privilege** you may draw to refill the pool after each ray you take.

The supply of rays is limited to the components provided. In the unlikely event that there are not enough rays in the bag to completely refill the pool, just use everything that's left in the bag.



## Launch

You may launch one star to a destination slot in either of the two constellations shown on the Launch action space. It costs 1  to launch a star. You may launch only once per action.

You may attach one Flare to your star to score its night points.



If you have the **Buy Night Points on Launch** privilege, you may spend more action points to purchase additional night points.



See **Flares** on page 11 for details on using Flares.

See **Launching Stars** on page 5 for details on how to launch and score stars.

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## Gain Flares

You may purchase any number of Flares in a single action, by paying action points. There are four cards in the pool, with costs of 1, 2, 3, and 4  as shown on the Sky Board. You may also flush the pool (discard all cards from the pool and refill the pool from the deck) by paying 1  each time you do so. You may not refill the pool nor move cards during your action except by paying to flush the pool.

When you have finished your entire turn, slide all cards remaining in the pool to fill the less-expensive positions, and refill the highest-cost positions from the Flares deck.

There is no limit to the number of Flares you can keep at a time.

See **Flares** on page 11 for details on using Flares.








# End of Game

The end of the game is triggered at daybreak: that is, when any player (live or Starbot) reaches or exceeds **65 Victory Points** on the score track. When this happens, finish that round and play one more complete round (so that all players have had an equal number of turns), then perform final scoring.




## Your Last Turn

In your last turn of the game, your final action is special. You may launch one star as usual, but without moving on the rondel or being on a Launch action space. Pay 1  and you may then launch a completed star to any eligible slot in any constellation. Record and score your star as usual: you may use your **Buy Night Points on Launch**  privilege if you have it, and you may attach a Flare if you have one.

If there are no more eligible slots (for example, if your star has only 2 rays and there are no more empty small slots on the board), you may still score your star. Take night points for the size of slot as shown below; you may still use your privileges and attach a Flare, but do not place any markers on the board or on your player mat.

You may take other actions as usual in your last turn, for example to gain rays or buy a Flare card. Just save 1  to pay for the launch as your last action.

If you cannot assemble a completed star, your last turn is forfeit (because there is no way for you to gain more victory points). Do not take any actions or move your marker on the rondel.




Slot Size	Night Points
	7
	11
	14

*Scoring for slotless final launch.*

## Scoring

**For Live Players:** During play, night points are acquired only by launching stars. Only night points are recorded on the score track during play.

At end of game, players now receive day points  for other accomplishments:

- Gain 5  for each of your alpha (big slot) stars.
- Players now reveal their fulfilled Laurels and their claimed Accolades, and add those victory points to their score. Players who have acquired the **Laurels + 3 Victory Points**  privilege gain an additional 3  per fulfilled Laurel.

**For Starbot Players:** During play, Starbot players receive the night points shown on their Starbot card each turn. At the end of the game, they receive day points from their Accolades, if any, and a number of victory points for each of their launched stars, depending on your choice of the Starbot difficulty setting. (See **Starbot Play** on page 13.)

The player (live or Starbot) with the most victory points is the winner. If there is a tie, the winner is the tied player who has launched the most stars. If there is still a tie, the winner is the tied player who has stars in the most constellations. And if there is still a tie, the tied players rejoice in a shared victory.

# Privileges

By launching into appropriate star slots, you can acquire special privileges during the game. Each privilege you acquire is yours to use for the remainder of the game, beginning with the action *after* you gain the privilege. It is useless to acquire any privilege more than once, but it's okay to launch a star to a slot that would give you a privilege you already have.



## Buy Night Points on Launch

When you launch a star, you may spend 2♦ to purchase 1 night point , as many times as you like.

You must launch a star to use this privilege. Merely visiting the action space is not sufficient. You may not use this privilege in the same action in which you acquire it.



## +1 Action Point

Gain one more action point (for a total of 6♦) at the start of each subsequent turn.



## Refill Rays

You may refill either ray pool each time you take a ray. This applies no matter why you are taking a ray: for example, you may use this privilege along with the **Core + Rays** privilege, or when using a Flare boon to take rays. Refilling this way costs nothing. When (and only when) you are taking a Gain Rays action, you may still also flush the associated pool for 1♦ as usual.



## Laurels +3 Victory Points

At the end of the game, each of your fulfilled Laurels gains 3 more victory points.



## Core + Ray

When you take the Gain Cores action, also gain one ray for free for each Core you take. You may take each ray from whichever pool you wish. The rays you take do not have to match the Cores you take.

If you have the Refill Rays privilege, you may use it. Otherwise do not refill the ray pools during or immediately after your Gain Cores action. (See **Clarifications** on page 14 for full details on when to refill pools.)



## Launch Alpha Star

You may launch into the largest (“alpha”) star slots.

## Flares

Flares may be acquired during the game, and held until used. There is no limit on how many Flares you may hold.

Each Flare may be used either to add victory points to launched stars, or to gain the card's boon, but never both. After using any Flare, keep it but turn it face down; each Flare may be used only once.

To gain night points, you may attach one Flare to your star during a Launch action. Calculate the number of night points the card grants by reading the **blue box** in the top half of the card. Include the star you are launching now in your calculation. Score those points immediately.

To use a Flare's boon, take the benefit shown in the **green box** in the bottom half of the card. You may use any number of Flares in this way, during, before, or after any appropriate action.

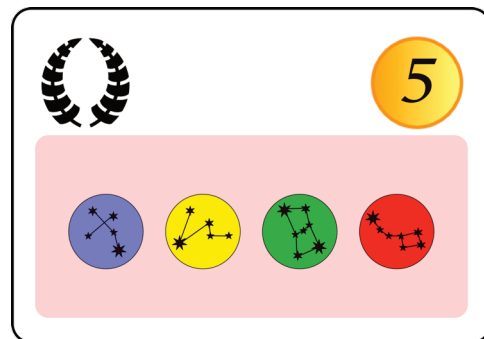


## Laurels

Laurels are given to you during setup. You may keep yours secret during the game.

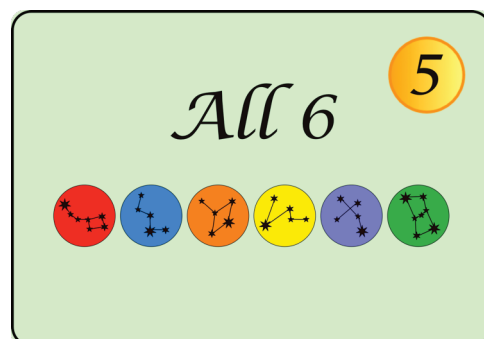
Each Laurel shows a goal and a number of day points. At the end of the game (not during), you will receive the day points if you have met the Laurel's goal.

The sample Laurel shown here grants 5 day points if you finish the game with at least one star in each of the four constellations shown.



## Accolades

The five Accolades are laid out face-up at the start of the game. Like the Laurels, each Accolade shows a goal and a number of day points. Each Accolade may be claimed only once, by the first player to achieve its goal. Claiming an Accolade is not an action and has no cost; you may immediately claim an Accolade after any action in which you have achieved its goal. Take the card from the Sky Board and keep it in front of you on the table. Victory points from Accolades are day points and are scored at the end of the game, not during.



# Example of Play

The Red player starts with their marker on the Gain Cores action space of the rondel.

Red gains 5♦ to spend this turn. They spend 2♦ to take two rondel steps, ignoring the first step and landing on the second step, which is Gain Long Rays.

Here they decide to spend 3♦ to take three long rays from the pool. When they are done taking the rays, they refill the pool by drawing three random replacement rays from the bag of long rays.

Red is now out of action points, and is done with their turn.



Red moves two steps for 2♦.

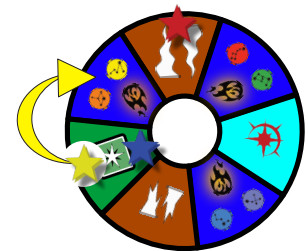
Now it is Yellow's turn. Yellow starts on the Gain Short Rays space, and has 2♦ saved on their player mat. This gives them a total of 7♦ to spend on this turn.

Yellow wants to gain a Core, so they spend 1♦ to move to that space. But the blue player already has a marker there, so to take that action Yellow must pay 1 extra ♦ (the "occupation surcharge") in addition to the cost of the action itself. Yellow decides to buy one Core, paying 2♦ (one for the card, one for the occupation surcharge).

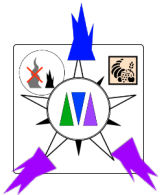


Yellow moves one step for 1♦.

Yellow still has 4♦ left to spend, and decides to keep going. They spend 1♦ to move to the Launch to Aquila or Hydrus (yellow and orange) action space, then spend 1 more ♦ to take that launch action.



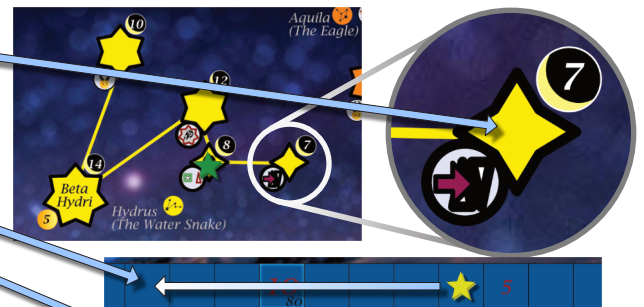
Yellow moves another step for 1♦.



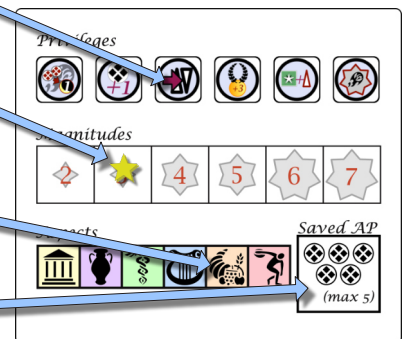
Yellow has 3 suitable rays, and so is ready to launch a magnitude 3 star. Yellow chooses to launch it into Hydrus. Hydrus already has one star, so Yellow must choose an empty slot connected to that one star. This could be either the small slot or the medium slot; but Yellow's star is only magnitude 3 so they must use the small slot.

Yellow puts a marker into that slot and records:

- 7 night points on the score track
- The Refill Rays privilege on their player mat
- Nothing for the magnitude 3 launch, because Yellow has already recorded a magnitude 3 launch in a previous action
- The "cornucopia" (brown) Aspect of their Core.



Finally, Yellow returns the star's rays to their respective bags, and discards the Core. Yellow now has 2♦ left to spend, but decides to end the turn by putting 2 markers back into the Saved AP box to spend in a later turn.



# Starbot Play

If you have Starbot players in the game, then shuffle the Starbot deck during setup and place it near the board.

Give each Starbot player the markers for a player color, and a turn-order place at the table. (Starbot players do not get player mats or any kind of cards.)

Starbot players take a turn each round like live players do, but their turns are different.

**On each Starbot turn**, turn up one Starbot card from the deck, and do four things on behalf of the Starbot:

1. **Take the action** shown on the card.
2. **Score the night points** shown on the card.
3. **Add a marker to an Accolade**.
4. **Discard** the Starbot card.



*A Starbot card*

**Scoring Victory Points:** Each Starbot card displays a number of night points, at the lower-left of the card. The Starbot immediately scores these points.

**Accolades:** Starbots do not win Accolades in the same way as live players, by accomplishing the achievement. Instead each Starbot card (except the Refresh card) specifies the index number of one of the five Accolade locations on the Sky Board, in the green diamond at lower-right. Place one of the Starbot's markers on that Accolade.

If the Accolade is no longer in play because some player (live or Starbot) has already won it, do not place a marker.

If a Starbot accumulates 5 of its own markers on an Accolade, it immediately wins that Accolade. Take the Accolade card and put it by the Starbot's marker supply. The starbot will gain the day points from the Accolade card during end-game scoring.

**See Starbot Actions in the Card Almanac  
for details on taking Starbot actions.**

# Clarifications

## When do pools refill?

All pools (the Cores pool, the Flares pool, and both ray pools) refill only when your entire turn is complete. At that time, refill any empty spaces in each pool, and remember to slide all remaining Flare cards left into the cheaper locations before refilling the higher-cost locations.

**Exception:** If you have the **Refill Rays** privilege, you may refill each ray pool *immediately* after taking any ray from the pool. (See **Privileges** on page XX for details.)

## When can you flush a pool?

You may pay 1 to flush a pool (that is, discard all items from the pool and then completely refill the pool) at any time during the pool's associated Gain action. For example, you may pay to flush the long rays while resolving the Gain Long Ray action.

You may not flush a pool at any other time. For example, you may not flush a ray pool while resolving the Gain Core action, even when you have the **Core + Ray** privilege that allows you to take a ray when gaining a star.

**Note:** You may use your **Refill Rays** privilege during the Gain Core action if you also have the **Core + Ray** privilege. This is not the same as flushing the pool, and it is explicitly allowed by the **Core + Ray** privilege. See **Privileges** on page 10 for details.

## When you flush a pool, what happens to the discards?

Discarded Cores should go immediately into the Core discard pile.

Discarded Flares go face-down on the bottom of the Flare deck, in any order.

Discarded rays may be held out until after their pool is refilled; then put them into their draw bag.

## What happens if you can't refill a pool?

In the unlikely event that you run out of Cores, Flares, or rays and cannot completely refill a pool, just refill it as much as possible. The value of the associated actions will be lessened if a pool is partially empty, and useless if completely empty. Refill the pools at the usual times once discards have been made available.

## Can I just save all my action points without spending any?

You can save up to 5♦ in the Saved AP box on your player mat between your turns. If you have more remaining than will fit in the box when you end your turn, the remainder are lost. You may choose to use all of your ♦ on your turn this way: you do not have to move on the rondel, and if you don't move you may take no actions. Simply store as many of your ♦ as will fit in the Saved AP box, and declare your turn over.

# Credits

The inspiration for the theme of this game came from the story "Stardock" by Fritz Leiber, written in 1965 and published as part of his book "Swords Against Wizardry". These stories and the others in the Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser series are excellent, and highly recommended for all fans of fantasy fiction.

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