



# Colossi

Rulebook

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## **Introduction**

You are a Colossus who haunts this island. You are battling with the other Colossi for control of Environments. To win an Environment, you must summon your faithful Acolytes, the blood-thirsty Beast, as well as Fire, Water, and Electricity to outwit and overpower your enemies.

## **Objective**

To win Colossi, you must win 3 Skirmishes to claim victory over 3 different Environments. To play a Quick Game, or if it is your first game, you can speed things up by playing the first to win 2 Skirmishes instead. Colossi is a free-for-all game, and will only have 1 winner.

## **Components**

- 4 Player decks with 24 cards each. Each of these decks has the same cards in them, but they have differently colored backs.
- 32 Items
- 19 Environments

## Setup

1. Shuffle the Item Deck and the Environment Deck and set to the side.
2. Draw 3 Environments and spread them out in the middle of the play area, with plenty of room to play cards on all sides of them.
3. Draw 1 Item for each Environment and place it face-up on the Environment.
4. Each player takes one of the decks of player cards, and shuffles it.
5. Determine a first player.

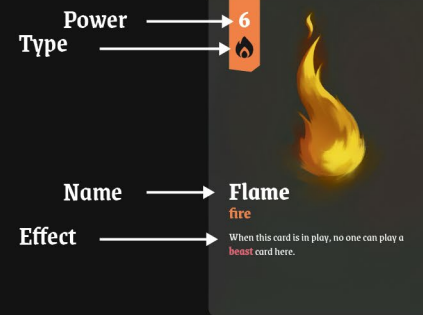
## Gameplay

Colossi has two phases: Handbuilding, and Skirmishes. During the Handbuilding Phase, you will prepare cards face-down to prepare the hands you will later use during Skirmishes. Once a Skirmish begins in an Environment, you will pick up the cards you prepared there and battle with those cards by playing them face-up.

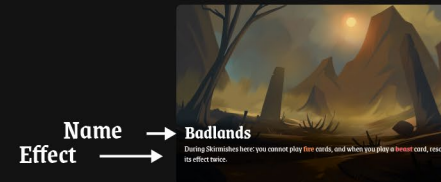
When the game begins, you will start with the Handbuilding phase, beginning with the first player and continuing clockwise.

## Card Details

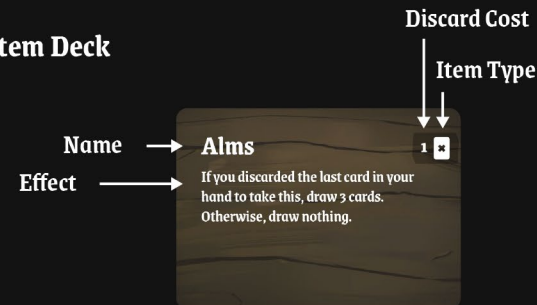
### Player Deck



### Environment Deck



### Item Deck



Type	Icon	# per deck
Divine Gift		5
Colossi		5
Electric		2
Acolyte		4
Fire		2
Beast		3
Water		3

### Type Symbols of Items



Single Use



Perk

Resolve immediately after taking, then discard.

Leave face-up in front of you, and discard after the Skirmish ends.

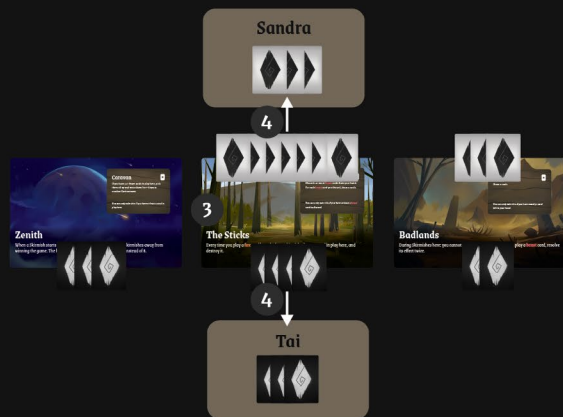
## Handbuilding

1. Sandra prepared her first card on the Badlands, then drew a card.
2. Tai prepared his first card on The Sticks, then drew a card.



## Initiation

3. A few turns later, Sandra sees that The Sticks has more than 8 total cards prepared on it. She Initiates a Skirmish there.
4. Sandra picks up the 5 cards she has prepared there, and adds them to her hand of 6 cards. Tai picks up the 4 cards he had prepared there and adds them to his hand of 3 cards. It is time to Skirmish.



## Handbuilding Phase

At the beginning of every Handbuilding phase, draw 3 cards from your deck. During the Handbuilding phase, you will prepare cards face-down in front of Environments\* to build the hands you'll use to fight there. On your turn, do one of the following:

- **Prepare 1 card** from your hand face-down in front of 1 of the 3 Environments, then draw from your deck so you still have 3 cards in your hand.
- **Initiate a Skirmish** in any Environment where there are at least 8 total cards prepared (including your cards and cards prepared by opponents). If you initiate a Skirmish, you are the Initiator, which means you will play first during the Skirmish. All players pick up all the cards they prepared on the Environment where you initiated and add them to their hand of 3 cards they already held.

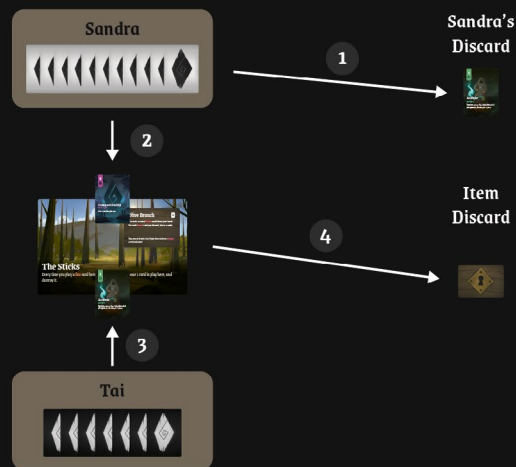
*Other rules about Handbuilding:*

- You cannot look at any face-down cards that have been prepared on Environments.
- You cannot take an Item from an Environment during the Handbuilding phase.

\*An important housekeeping note: You should always prepare your cards on the same side of each Environment, so it is clear which cards belong to you. Especially in a 4 player games, things can become messy and confusing if each player does not keep their cards in a neat pile on their side of the environment, clearly separated from the other players' cards.

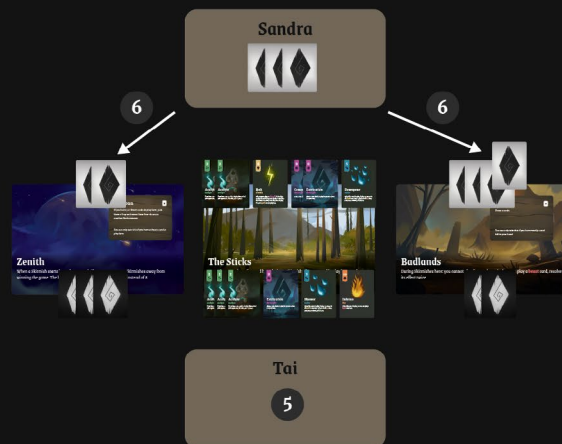
## Skirmish

1. Sandra has 11 cards in her hand, and must immediately discard 1 to reach the hand limit of 10.
2. Sandra Initiated, so she plays first. She plays *Companionship* and resolves immediately.
3. Tai takes his turn next, and plays an *Acolyte*.
4. Instead of playing a card from her hand, Sandra uses her turn to take the Item. She resolves its effect immediately, and discards it.



## Passing

5. Later, Tai is out of cards and can no longer do anything. Sandra Passes to save her 3 cards for future Skirmishes.
6. Sandra takes the 3 cards remaining in her hand, and prepares them face-down on other Environments.



## Skirmish Phase

During Skirmishes, you always have a hand limit of 10 cards. After the Skirmish begins and you pick up your prepared cards, you must discard down to 10 cards if you have more than that. If at any point during the Skirmish your hand exceeds 10 cards, immediately discard back down to 10. Select which card(s) you want to discard and put them into your discard pile.

Beginning with the Initiator and continuing clockwise, take turns. On your turn you will do one of the following:

- **Play 1 card** from your hand face-up and resolve immediately. After you play a card, it remains face up at this Environment until the Skirmish ends.
- **Take 1 Item** from this Environment and resolve immediately. You can only do this if you have at least 1 card in your hand. Most Items have a Discard cost, which is how many cards you must discard in order to take the Item. Pay the discard cost, then resolve the Item.
- **Pass**, meaning that you will not do anything else during this Skirmish. If you have cards remaining in your hand when you pass, immediately move those cards face down to either of the other 2 active Environments (not all cards need to go to the same Environment). After passing, you should have no cards in your hand and you do not do anything else during this Skirmish.

*Other rules about Passing:*

- If all of your opponents have passed but you still have cards in your hand, you may keep playing them one at a time, and pass at any time. The Skirmish only ends once every player has passed or run out of cards.
- If you are not allowed to play any of the cards in your hand (for example: you have 2 BEAST cards, but there is a FIRE card in play), you must Pass.

# Scoring

Sandra has:

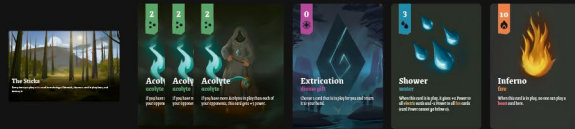
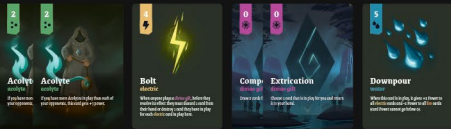
- 4 Power from her Acolytes.
- 8 Power from her Electric card, since it gets +2 Power from each of the 2 Water cards in play.
- 0 Power from her Divine Gift.
- 5 Power from her Water card

For a total of 17 Power.

Tai has:

- 15 Power from Acolytes. Each is worth +3 Power because he has more of them in play.
- 0 Power from his Divine Gift.
- 3 Power from his Water card.
- 6 Power for his Fire card, since it gets -2 Power for each Water card in play

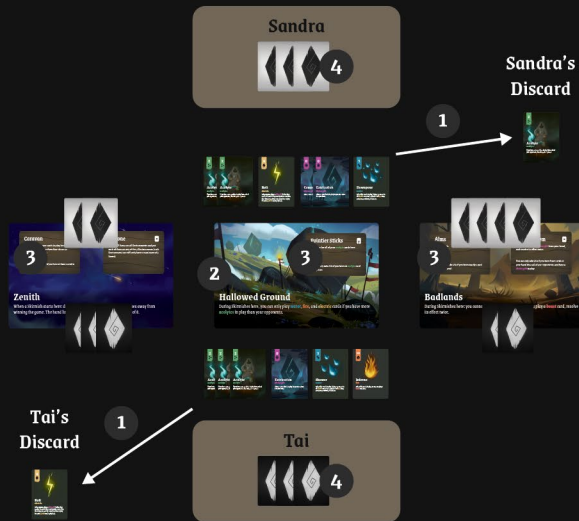
For a total of 24 Power. Tai wins this Skirmish.



# Cleanup

1. Discard all cards in play.
2. Draw a new Environment.
3. Draw a new Item for each Environment.

4. Sandra and Tai draw back up to 3 cards to begin the next Handbuilding Phase. Tai will play first in this next phase, since Sandra Initiated the previous Skirmish.



# Scoring and Cleanup

When all players have passed or are out of cards, tally up the Power each player has in play on the Environment, and determine a winner. Then:

1. All players discard all of the cards they had in play at the end of the Skirmish. Discard any Items from that Environment that were not used, unless otherwise specified.
2. The winner keeps the Environment card as a trophy, places it in front of them so other players can see how many Skirmishes they have won. Draw another Environment from the deck so there are still 3 Environments in play.
3. Draw 1 more Item for each Environment in play and place it face-up on each of the Environments. If an Environment already has 3 Items on it, do not place another one there.

Begin Handbuilding again with the player to the left of the Initiator.

# Tiebreakers:

- If there is a tie for the most power, the player who has more cards in play wins.
- If the number of cards in play is also a tie, begin with the player to the right of the Initiator, and continue counterclockwise until you reach a tied player. That player is the winner. (In other words, the Initiator would always lose this tiebreaker).

# Game End

Once any player has won 3 Skirmishes, the game ends immediately. If you are playing a Quick Game, the game ends immediately once any player has won 2 Skirmishes.

## Strategy

- **Don't be afraid to Pass if you aren't going to win a Skirmish:** Winning Colossi is a lot easier if you have more cards than your opponents. This means that deciding when to Pass is a critical decision so that you can save your cards for future Skirmishes.
- **Look for synergies:** Many of your cards are more powerful in specific situations. For example, try to prepare your Water and Electric cards together, and put your Fire cards somewhere else. Or, prepare your Rampage card on an Environment where your opponents have more cards than you.
- **Keep an eye out for specific cards:** As you become more familiar with your deck, you can do a bit of card counting to keep track of whether your opponent has already used their Rampage card, or to have a sense of how many Acolytes might be out there. Use this to your advantage.



## Appendix

## Frequently Misunderstood Rules

During the Handbuilding phase, you must either prepare a face-down card, or initiate a Skirmish. You cannot do both on one turn. And you can never take an Item during Handbuilding.

During Skirmishes, you must either play a face-up card, pass, or take an Item. You can only do one per turn.

Even if you have no cards prepared when someone Initiates a Skirmish, you still participate in the Skirmish with the 3 cards that are already in your hand.

Your Water, Electric, and Fire cards affect all players, including you and all of your opponents.

If you take a Discard Item during a Skirmish, you must use it immediately and discard it. You cannot hold it and save it for later.

When you pass during a Skirmish, you must immediately move all the cards in your hand face-down to other Environments, before the next player takes their turn.

Passing does not mean that you concede or lose the Skirmish. The Power of your cards is what determines whether you won or lost.

## Definition of Terms

**Discard Pile:** Each player has their own Discard Pile. Any time you Discard a card from your hand or a card you had in play, place it in your Discard Pile. Your Discard Pile must be face-up. When your Deck has no more cards left to draw, shuffle your Discard Pile to form a new Deck.

**In play:** A card is “in play” if it is face-up at an Environment during a Skirmish. Cards in your hand, deck, or discard pile are not in play. Some cards will use the phrasing “in play for an opponent.” That means cards that are face-up at an Environment where they are in play for an opponent and currently belong to their deck.

**Initiator:** The player who initiates a Skirmish during the Handbuilding phase is the Initiator. The Initiator always plays first during Skirmishes. After the Skirmish is complete, the player to the left of the Initiator goes first in the next Handbuilding phase.

**Power:** Each card has Power in the top left. Power can be increased or decreased by other cards in play. Accumulating the most Power with your cards in play is how you win a Skirmish. Power can never go below zero.

**Prepare:** You prepare cards by placing them in front of Environments during the Handbuilding phase. Prepared cards are not considered to be “in play.”

**Type:** Each card has a Type: Colossus, Acolyte, Beast, Divine Gift, Water, Electric, and Fire. The type of the card is never changed.





## Card Clarifications

### Player Cards

#### Acolyte

For example, if you have 3 Acolytes in play, and your opponent has 2: Each of your Acolytes would have 5 Power, and each of your opponent's Acolytes would have 2 Power. But if your opponent plays a third Acolyte, yours would each have 2 Power because you no longer have more Acolytes in play than all of your opponents.

#### Abduct

You must take a card that is in play for an opponent, meaning that you cannot Abduct a Curse card that is in play for you.

#### Pillage

Note that you are choosing a card type, not a specific card. So you would not say "Inferno," you would say "Fire."

#### Rampage

If this was the last card in your hand when you played it, your opponents must discard all of the cards in their hands.

#### Channel Power

Simply count how many cards this opponent played, and ignore the Power of the cards they played.

Do not count Items, only count Player Cards.

Only count cards in play. For example, discarded cards, or cards tucked beneath a Heap would not count here.

## **Heap**

If your Heap is discarded, Abducted, Extricated, or moved to another Environment while it is in play, discard all the cards that were tucked underneath your Heap.

You may only tuck cards on the turn when you play Heap. You cannot tuck more cards on subsequent turns.

## **Extrication**

If there is a Curse card in play for you, you may Extricate it.

You can only Extricate a card that is currently in play for you and currently belongs to your deck. This means that you cannot Extricate a card that used to belong to you, but was abducted by another player.

## **Electric**

The effects of Electric cards stack. For example: if there are 3 Electric cards in play when you play a Divine Gift, you must discard 3 cards.

There might be scenarios where you have no cards in play and no cards left in your hand when you play your Divine Gift. In these scenarios, you do not have to discard anything.

This effect is still active, even after the player who played it has Passed.

## **Fire**

Fire cards affect all players: you cannot play a Beast card if there are any Fire cards in play, including your own Fire cards.

A Fire card only prevents play of future Beast cards, but does not affect any Beast cards that are already in play.

This effect is still active, even after the player who played it has Passed.

## **Water**

Water cards affect all Fire and Electric cards, regardless of who played them.

Cards cannot go below 0 Power. If there is a Flame in play and there are 5 Water cards in Play, the Kindling has Power of 0.

## **Environments**

### **Badlands**

You can play a Manifest to play a Fire card here, which will block Beast cards as usual.

### **Blitz Creek**

If you are the player who reached 25 Power and you still have cards in your hand, you may continue playing until you Pass as usual.

### **Cavern**

If someone played a Curse card in front of you, that counts toward your 5 card limit.

Items do not count toward your 5 card limit.

### **Chaos Fissure**

When opponents prepare a card here after you initially play here, they still draw back up to 3 cards as usual. After everyone has played, the next player to your left should take their turn as usual.

### **Desert**

You can play a Manifest to play a Water card here.

**Glass River**

Effects from cards still do not activate when they are prepared here, even though they are face-up. Cards only take effect during Skirmishes.

**Graveyard**

If you have no discard pile, do nothing.

**Hallowed Ground**

If you have the same number of Acolytes in play as another player, you cannot play Water, Fire, or Electric cards here.

**Impulse Isle**

You may pass at any point during your turn, and you do not have to play all of your cards. Turn order is still normal: start with Initiator and proceed clockwise.

You may still play Beast cards and count them toward your point total, but you must ignore the effect text on Beast cards.

**Magnetic Maar**

If a Skirmish ends and at the start of the next Handbuilding phase, each player already has 7 cards in play, the next play must still initiate here on their turn.

**Oasis**

If you have the same number of cards as another player, do not draw any cards.

**Poison Swamp**

If you move cards here while passing during a Skirmish, you do not need to follow the normal rules for Poison Swamp, because you are not preparing those cards during the Handbuilding phase.

**Sacrifice Mountain**

You must do this, even if you choose to pass afterward.

If you have multiple opponents, you may choose to put both cards on the same deck, or on 2 different decks.

Do this after discarding down to 10 cards, if you started the Skirmish with more than 10 cards.

**The Brink**

If there are no opponent cards here, don't discard anything.

If you move cards here while passing during a Skirmish, you do not need to follow the normal rules for The Brink, because you are not preparing those cards during the Handbuilding phase.

**The Sticks**

You can only discard Player Cards, not Items.

**Volcano**

If you have any cards left in your hand, you must discard all of them when you pass, even if you won the Skirmish, and even if you are the last player to pass.

If you have a Bluff in play when you pass, you can still move it to a different environment because it's not in your hand.

## Zenith

For example: if you have won 2 Skirmishes in a normal game, you do not draw any extra cards. But if you have won 0 or 1 Skirmishes, you draw 3 cards.

## Items

### Cloak

Once the card is revealed, it is in play, and affects all players as usual. For example, if you reveal a Water card, it will affect the Power of everyone's Fire and Electric cards as usual.

### Terraformer

If the new Environment drawn is the Stockpile Steppes, immediately add up to 3 Items to it if necessary, and keep them all face-down as usual. If one of the discarded Environments was the Stockpile Steppes, leave the Items there, but flip them face-up.

**Game Design:** John Drexler

**Art:** Sean Thurlow

**Graphic Design:** Grant Thomas

### Special thanks:

**Walter Somerville** partnered with me on the first games I developed before Colossi. His perspective influenced me so much that it feels like his fingerprints are all over Colossi.

**Chris Thornton** tested Colossi many times, and beat me handily most of the time. His feedback inspired many good ideas.

In 2016, **Mitch Prentis** visited me while I lived in Indonesia. I had just started designing games. I was fumbling through an explanation of a not-even-half-baked concept for my first game idea. Mitch humored me, listened carefully, and asked good questions for hours.

I explained the idea so poorly that he misunderstood me and asked, “So, players prepare cards in 3 different lanes and have to make contingency plans because they don’t know which hand will resolve next? That does sound interesting.” That was not my idea. But I immediately realized that his interpretation was much more interesting than what I had in mind.

I revisited this concept for years. It eventually became Colossi. This funny interaction helped me learn:

1. It is worth talking about your ideas, even if you have no clue what you’re doing yet.
2. Good ideas truly come from everywhere — even from a misunderstanding.
3. Having friends like Mitch is invaluable. Strive to be like Mitch.

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