

Oracle

Contents

108 Round Cards Including:

- 30 Planets (12 Inner [1-12], 18 Outer [13-30])
- 12 Hazard Cards (dark red)
- 66 Equipment Cards (24 weapons, 13 defenses 29 utility cards)

12 Alien Race Tokens

12 Player reference mats

Instructions

Overview

The Universe is ending. Legends and myths throughout the galaxy tell of a way to survive. The Interstellar Oracle promises eternal life to the species that possesses it. The object of the game is to find the Oracle and hold on to it until the final planet has collapsed, thus ending the game.

Setup

- Start by separating the Inner and Outer Planet cards. Shuffle both stacks.
- Randomly deal two Inner Planet Cards and three Outer Planet Cards at each side of the play area. The players will arrange the cards in front of them in a trapezoid pattern. Two Inner Planets will be in the front row towards the center of the play area. The three Outer Planets will be behind the two Inner Planets closer to the player. Diagram A is the playing configuration for 2, 3, or 4 player games. Diagram B is the playing configuration for 5 and 6 player games. All planet cards will be used in 5 or 6 player games. Return unused planet cards to the box if you are playing with less than 5 players.
- Shuffle the 12 Hazard Cards (dark red) and place one card face up on each of the inner planets. You will have extra Hazard Cards unless you are playing a 5 or 6-player game. Place unused Hazard Cards back in the box.
- Now create a Seed Deck of the Equipment Cards that have a black ¼" dot at the bottom. If you are playing a 2,3, or 4 player game you will only be making a Seed Deck with these cards. In a 5 or 6 Player game you will be using 4 additional Equipment Cards selected randomly from the deck. This Seed Deck of Equipment Cards is for seeding the inner planets.
- Shuffle the Seed Deck (including the Oracle).
- Place one card from the Seed Deck face down under each of the Inner Planet Cards.
- Using the remaining Equipment Cards, place an Equipment Card face down under each of the Outer Planet cards.

- The two Inner Planets in front of a player represent alien home worlds. The player mats show where the alien races originate from. The player may choose which of the two races they will represent. Take the token that corresponds with this alien and make sure that the full color side is face up.
- Deal each player five (5) Equipment Cards. This is the player's starting hand. Place the remaining cards in the middle of the table (in the area called: The Nebula)
- **A player may not look under any planet unless their token is on that planet (unless they have a long range sensor card).**
- **Players may not look at the Equipment Card under an inner planet unless they can overcome the Hazard Card. Each Hazard Card lists how it can be countered (unless they have a long range sensor card).**
- The youngest player goes first.

Playing the Game

When it is a player's turn, the player may move their pawn up to one space unless an Equipment Card that modifies movement is played. A player may take an Equipment Card from the planet landed upon or the planet from which the player started, but not both. If the player does not have room in their hand for the new card (hand limit is typically 5 cards), they may exchange a card from their hand and leave it face down under the planet card.

If a planet has a Hazard Card on top of it, the player must overcome the Hazard Card by either using a card from their hand or by using their natural Racial Ability. If the Hazard can be successfully overcome then the player may take the Equipment Card into their hand. If this will cause them to exceed the maximum hand limit of five (5), they must discard a card and place it face down underneath the planet card. *The player must declare what Equipment Card they used to overcome the Hazard Card and place it in the discard pile in the center of the table. If they used their active racial ability they flip their token from full color to grayscale (passive racial abilities do not result in the token being flipped over).* The overcome Hazard Card is placed back in the box until the end of the game.

When a player moves onto a planet that is occupied by another player they may initiate diplomacy and/or combat. The player that arrived at the planet is deemed the "Attacker" and always plays first. The Attacker may choose to play any of the three diplomacy cards and depart without going into combat. The opposing player (Defender) may also play a diplomacy card, *but does not have the option* to flee unless they have a Wormhole Generator or other Movement Card. If the Attacker does not leave after playing diplomacy cards or does not have any diplomacy cards to play they may challenge the Defender to combat. The Attacker does not need to initiate combat. Multiple players may occupy the same planet. You may not initiate combat unless it is your turn. The defender may not choose to initiate combat.

Combat Overview

Combat is broken up into 3 phases

- Long Range Attacks
- Medium Range Attacks
- Short Range Attacks

The Attacker may play a Long Range Attack Card. Then the Defender may play a defense, if able. If the attacker played a Long Range Attack card and a defense card is not played, the defending player dies. If the Attacker does not possess a Long Range Card or does not wish to play it, their opponent may play a Long Range Attack. Then the Attacker may play a defense card, if able. ANY attack card that is not neutralized or countered by either a defensive Equipment Card or Racial Ability results in a player's death. If both players survive attacks at long range, or no Long Range Attacks are played, Medium Range Attacks are then allowed to be played. Starting with the Attacker, a Medium Range Attack Card may be played. This may be countered by the Defender, who may then counter attack with their own Medium Range Attack Card. This must be countered in turn by the attacker or they will die. If both players survive the medium range attacks, or no Medium Range Attacks are used, Short Range Attacks are then allowed to be played. The Attacker may play a Short Range Attack. The Defender may play a defense and then play a short range attack of their own. The attacking player must defend or die. If both players survive the short range attacks, or no short range attacks are used, a stalemate is declared.

Player Death: If during any attack phase a player dies, the player's token is placed in The Nebula. The dead player's cards will go into the discard pile AFTER the victor has had a chance to see if they desire any of their opponent's cards. The victor may not exceed the 5 card hand limit unless they have the Galactic Codex or have a racial ability that enables them to have more cards. The victorious player may discard cards if they need to make room for new cards. The player stuck in the Nebula will replenish their hand with five new cards from the draw pile when it is their NEXT turn. They will be allowed to leave the Nebula or play cards the turn AFTER they replenish their hand.

Examples of Combat:

1. Claire moves to Molly's location. Claire plays a diplomacy card, the Seduce Card. Molly is unable to counter the card with a Hologram or Movement Card. She must let Claire draw two cards randomly from her hand. Claire draws a Pistol and a Shield. She decides to keep both cards and gives Molly a Taser Glove card in return. She decides to proceed with combat. Claire starts combat with a long range energy attack by playing a Blaster

Card. She is confident that this will be effective because Claire stole Molly's Shield Card. Molly can not defend without a shield, but she is able to evade the attack and end combat by sneaking away with a Cloaking Device Card.

2. Bryan moves to Glenn's location. Bryan does not have a Diplomacy Card and neither does Glenn. Bryan plays a long range weapon first, the sniper rifle. Glenn is playing the 'Roid Worms which are impervious to physical attacks. Glenn uses his long range attack turn to play the Sonic Cannon. Bryan has the Instant Vacuum card and plays it. Next, Bryan plays a Laser card for his medium range attack. Glenn does not have a defense. Glenn's token is placed in the Nebula and Bryan gets to look through Glenn's cards to see if there is something that he wants (up to his hand limit.)
3. Molly moves to Bryan's location. She uses a long range attack card, Acid Mine. Bryan counters with Chemical Foam. Bryan attacks with a long range attack card Blaster. Molly counters it with a Shield. Molly uses a Neural Amp to make a mental attack at medium range. Bryan has no way to counter the attack and dies. He gives his cards to Molly. Molly may keep cards from Bryan's old hand (up to her hand limit) and discard the rest into The Nebula. Bryan's token is placed in the Nebula.

The Oracle

- When a player overcomes a Hazard Card and draws the Oracle into their hand, they must announce, "I have the Oracle!"
- They take the Oracle card and place it in front of them. It does not count towards their hand limit.
- At the end of their turn, and the end of every player's turn until the end of the game, remove the planet with the highest number from the play field. Place the planet back in the box. Equipment Cards from under the disappearing planet will be put in the discard pile of The Nebula in the center of the game play area.
- If a player is on a planet when it is removed from play, they may move to an adjacent planet even if it is not their turn. It must be a planet that is legal to move to normally.
- **The player holding the Oracle may not end their turn in the Nebula.** If they do not have additional move cards, the player to their left determines what planet they are pulled towards by the Oracle. The player that has the Oracle in their hand when the last planet disappears is declared the winner!

Utility Cards

Equipment Cards with a light blue background are Utility Cards. They may only be used once before being discarded. Weapon and Defense cards may be used multiple times and are only discarded if a player is killed. Utility cards may be played at anytime, even when it is not your turn, and should take effect before other cards or combat.

Xenocaches

Useful objects are scattered through the known universe in protected vaults known as “Xenocaches”. Each planet starts with at least one equipment card under it. The inner planets have the most useful items and are protected by the Hazard cards. Once a turn, in addition to moving and/or searching a planet, a player may discard two cards from their hand and then draw to replenish up to their allowed hand limit. (For example if I only have 4 cards in my hand, I could discard 2 and draw 3.) This represents a hidden Xenocache of supplies. A player must announce that they are “Xenocaching” to their opponents.

Racial Abilities

Each Alien Race has both Passive and Active Abilities. The Passive Ability is always present and doesn't have to be declared or "turned on". The Active Ability may only be used once during the game. Once the Active Racial Ability is used, turn the token over from the full color side to the black and white background. The player's choice of which race to play is determined by the two inner planets in that player's system. The numbers correspond to the listing below.

1: Space Amoebas

Passive Ability: Immune to acid attack

Active Ability: May make Short Range Acid Attack

2: Vriddhi

Passive Ability: May navigate Labyrinth without losing a turn.

Active Ability: May make a natural Sound Attack at Medium Range.

3: Nelgs

Passive Ability: Can't be ambushed (no Long Range Attacks may be used against them.)

Active Ability: Short Range Physical Attack

4: Insectoid

Passive Ability: Immune to Mental Attacks

Active Ability: May Clone once per game.

5: Ersatz

Passive Ability: Immune to Diplomacy Cards

Active ability: may use natural cloaking device to escape combat

6: Stone People

Passive ability: Immune to disease/plague/poison

Active ability: Medium Range Physical Attack

7: 'ROID Worms

Passive Ability: Natural Armor at all times (no physical attacks may be used against them).

Active Ability: Short Range Fire Attack

8: Humans

Passive Ability: May hold one additional card. (If they possess the galactic codex, they may hold up to 8 cards in their hand.)

Active Ability: May neutralize native planetary defense OR force another player to trade with them.

9: Kith

Passive ability: Immune to Cloaks and Holograms

Active ability: Natural Mental Attack at Medium Range.

10: Xangofin

Passive ability: Short Range Attacks made by Xangofins cannot be defended against.

Active ability: Intimidate another player

11: Alar

Passive ability: Attack at +1 range. (Short range attacks may be used at Medium Range and Medium Range Attacks may be used at Long Range)

Active ability: Move +2

12: Zeta

Passive ability: Immune to Energy Attacks

Active ability: Natural Energy Attack at Medium Range.

Glossary & Card Descriptions

Acid Bola: A Medium Range Acid Attack. Chemical Foam defends against it.

Acid Mine: A Long Range Acid Attack. Chemical Foam defends against it.

Armor: Defends against all Physical Attacks. This includes Swords, Pistols, and Sniper Rifles.

Blaster: This is a Long Range Energy Attack. The Shield card defends against it.

Chemical Foam: A defense against Acid Attacks. It may also be used to counteract the Plague Hazard Card.

Cloaking Device: You may escape combat but remain on the planet.

Clone: If you die, you may start at the same space where you died with all of your equipment, except the Oracle, which goes to the victor.

Entropy Inhibitor: These cards may be placed under a planet card. If revealed when a planet is going to be destroyed by the effects of the Oracle, the planet is not destroyed until the NEXT turn. The planet remains in play and the Entropy Inhibitor is placed in the discard pile. Next turn the planet will be removed from play.

Flamethrower: A Medium Range Fire Attack. The Instant Vacuum defends against it. It may also be used to destroy the Aggressive Plant Hazard Card.

Galactic Cannon: May target any planet adjacent to your character token. This instantly kills all players on the target planet. All Equipment Cards are discarded. If the Oracle is present in a target player's hand, that card is left on the targeted planet. Move and Wormhole Generator cards may be used to avoid death by the Galactic Canon. The Galactic Cannon may not be used from inside The Nebula.

Galactic Codex: It allows you to hold 7 cards in your hand. If you are playing the human character, you may hold 8 cards in your hand. Use the Galactic Codex with the Time Machine to travel to the End of the Universe.

If you possess the Interstellar Oracle, Time Machine, and Galactic Codex, you instantly win the game!

Graviton Beam: Allows a player to push or pull objects. You may pull objects off of a planet without overcoming the Hazard card. You may not look at the object before you acquire it. You may pull objects off of planets when it is not your turn to keep other players from getting them. You may also push objects onto planets with hazards to prevent opponents from getting them. Like all light blue utility cards, it may only be used once before being discarded.

Hologram: Defends against Diplomacy Cards (Seduce, Intimidate, and Trade)

Instant Vacuum: A Defense used to prevent death from Flamethrowers or Sonic Canons. It can also prevent death from racial Sound or Fire Attacks.

Intellect Scrambler: This is a defense against Mental Attacks **and kills the player using the mental attack.**

Interstellar Oracle: This is the card that you need in your possession at the end of the game to win the game! **If you possess the Interstellar Oracle, Time Machine, and Galactic Codex, you instantly win the game!**

Intimidate: A diplomacy card played before combat. The player using this card selects a card from random out of their opponents hand. This card may also be used to overcome the Natives Hazard Cards. If a player has the Oracle when Intimidate is used on them, they must mix the Oracle into their hand before the card is selected by their opponent.

Laser: This is a Medium Range Energy Attack. The Shield card defends against it.

Long Range Sensors: A player may look at the cards underneath ANY planet OR may look at an opponent's hand.

Medicine: Defends against Poison. Also allows players to neutralize Plague planets.

Move: The player may move an additional one or two spaces. With their normal move, this may allow them to move two or three spaces respectively. This may be used before combat, to evade an attack, or to escape the galactic canon.

Neural Amp: Allows all characters to make a Mental Attack at medium range. Allows characters with racial Mental Attacks to attack at long range OR make an additional natural Mental Attack. A Kith player may discard the Neural Amp card to flip their token back to the full color side which allows them to make a racial Mental attack.

Neural Whip: This is a Short Range Mental Attack. The Intellect Scrambler prevents this attack and kills the attacking character.

Pistol: A Medium Range Physical Attack. The Armor card prevents this attack.

Poison: A Short Range Attack. The only Defense is Medicine.

Scavengers: A player may replenish their cards with up to 2 cards chosen from the discard pile. They may draw additional cards from the draw pile until they have a total of 5 cards. This card may be used anywhere.

Seduce: A Diplomacy Card played before combat. The player using the Seduce Card chooses two cards randomly from the opponent's hand. The player must then give the opponent one card from their hand. The card they give back does not have to be one of the cards that they just drew from their opponent. This card may also be used to overcome the Natives Hazard Cards. If a player has the Oracle when Seduce is used on them, they must mix the Oracle into their hand before the two cards are selected by their opponent.

Shield: This is a defense against all Energy Attacks, which include Taser gloves, Lasers, Blasters, and Zeta Attacks.

Sonic Canon: a Long Range Sonic Attack. Instant Vacuum is a Defense against this attack.

Sniper Rifle: This is Long Range Physical Attack. The armor card defends against it.

Sword: A Short Range Physical Attack. Armor protects against this attack. It may also be used to destroy the Aggressive Plant Hazard Card.

Taser Glove: This is a Short Range Energy Attack. Shields will protect against it.

Time Machine: This card may be used to take an extra turn, but must be discarded if used in this manner. Use with Galactic Codex to travel to the End of the Universe. **If you possess the Time Machine, The Galactic Codex, and the Interstellar Oracle, you win the game.**

Trade: A Diplomacy Card played before combat. Both players select a card from their hands and give it to the other player. This card may also be used to overcome the Natives Hazard Cards.

Wormhole Generator: This card allows a player to move to any space on the board, including the Nebula. It may be used at **ANY** time.

Strategies

The basic strategy of the game is to get a variety of weapons and defenses in your hand before attempting to get the Oracle.

The trifecta combination of Oracle, Time Machine, and Galactic Codex is a great way to win the game!

The Oracle will change hands often. You may want to wait until later in the game to attempt to get it.

Use Long Range Sensor cards to discover what cards your opponents have before you attack them.

Don't forget your active and passive natural racial abilities!

Advanced Rules

After you play the game two dozen or more times, you may wish to play with some variations to spice things up! I wanted to make a “complete” game and not have expansions, but I did dream up some ways to make things more challenging that I decided not to include in the original rules.

- 1) When overcoming a hazard card, you may place it in front of you. It does not count towards your hand limit and may be deployed at any time on any planet that you arrive at. Once deployed, all players must overcome the obstacle if they want to retrieve the Xenocache on the planet, including the player that deployed it.
- 2) When you reveal an Entropy Inhibitor card, you may decide how many turns the Entropy Inhibitor will prolong the game. (Between 1 and 4 additional turns.) The game comes with small red round tokens to denote how many additional turns the planet will remain in play.
- 3) Allow Players to choose which alien race they wish to play instead of having them assigned randomly.
- 4) If both players use a seduce card, they must be locked in a closet for 7 minutes.
- 5) Buy another copy of the game and play the 7-12 player version described on the next page.

Rules for playing with two copies of the game (7-12 players)

During the setup phase: Shuffle the 12 inner planet cards from one set and deal one in front of each player. This is the assigned alien race that the player will play during the game. Shuffle the second set of 12 inner planet cards and deal them in front of each player. There will always be an even number of systems in the “Universe”. If you are playing with an odd number of players, deal an extra card in front of the “dummy” player. When you are creating the Seed Deck, you will only have one Oracle. Set the other Oracle card aside. Take the number of players and add one if it is an odd number. Multiply this number by 2 and it will be the number of seed cards in the Seed Deck. (Example: If there are 9 players, 20 cards will be in the Seed Deck. $(9+1)*2$) Use the 15 seed cards with the black dots and supplement additional cards from the equipment deck to fulfill the seed deck requirements.

The game is played normally except for when dealing with planets vanishing because of the Oracle. The “Universe” is divided in half. One side is the “Charmed” side and the other is the “Strange” side. While the Oracle is in a player’s possession, the highest numbered planet will be removed from the “Charmed” side first and next turn will be removed from the “Strange” side. Planet removal is alternated this way until the game ends.

Be sure to visit us at www.interstellaroracle.com and let us know what you think!