

Arcs Rules FAQ (Base Game)

Last Updated: December 20, 2024

This FAQ answers rule questions related to the Arcs rulebook for the core game. For FAQs and errata on specific cards, please refer to the [Leder Card Library](#).

This FAQ is not exhaustive—it does not cover every rule, just those that may be overlooked or cause confusion. It does not cover the Blighted Reach Expansion—see

[☰ Arcs Rules FAQ \(Blighted Reach\)](#) .

Page numbers in this FAQ refer to the base rulebook. This document is based on a community FAQ originally compiled prior to release by [turmoilbyrd](#). We're indebted!

Errata

Core Rulebook, Page 5, Step Q: Edited to: "Discard all action cards not in players' hands into a facedown action discard pile on the map, then shuffle it."

There are a couple situations where discard order matters.

Core Rulebook, Page 17, Resources: Edited last paragraph to: "Some cards say they hold resources. These resources can be spent and add to ambitions, but they cannot be stolen in battle unless explicitly allowed. If a card holding resources is stolen, the resources on the card stay on it. If it is buried, discarded, or scrapped, the resources on it return to the supply."

This clarifies some card interactions with raiding, Blighted Reach cards, and with cards like [Silver-Tongues](#). Yes, you can steal resources off cards with Silver-Tongues!

Core Rulebook, Page 19: Edited to: "Discard all action cards not in players' hands into the action discard pile on the map **face down**, then shuffle it."

There are a couple situations where discard order matters.

Core Rulebook, Page 21: Added the following text as the second to last sentence: "Finally, if any leaders have extra setup steps, players perform them in turn order."

Clarifies that leader setup is done in turn order.

Clarifications

Setup

Perform the setup steps given by Leader cards after drafting everything. (For example, the [Archivist](#) prompts you to gain lore cards.)

The two initial resources are always placed in the two leftmost resource slots, even if you have more slots open. (p.5) When setting up a Leader (p.21), you gain resources as shown on the Leader card in the order shown on the card, rather than based on your starting planets.

Simultaneous Triggers

If multiple things happen at the same time but must be resolved in order, the player taking their turn chooses their order (p.22). Here are some examples:

- After rolling dice in battle: [Skirmishers](#) and [Empath's Vision](#)
- After a battle: [Repair Drones](#) and the [Quartermaster's Resilient](#) ability
- Declaring an ambition: The [Noble's Connected](#) ability and [Farseers](#)

Resources “You Have”

Sometimes, an effect checks how many of a resource “you have.” This counts all of the resources in your play area. This includes the Imperial Trust in the Blighted Reach Expansion, resource supplies on Monopoly cards in the Blighted Reach Expansion, and other cards that hold resources, even if they are **frozen**.

This means they count towards ambitions, count towards Monopoly calculations in the Blighted Reach Expansion, and apply to cards like [Keeper's Solidarity](#) and [Skirmishers](#).

“Like they are Loyal”

Some cards allow you to use buildings “like they are Loyal.” This is a shorthand that essentially means “you do not need to control the buildings” and in the case of taxing “you don't take a Captive.”

Other cards may refer to abilities you can do with Loyal buildings, but those abilities do not apply to buildings you are using “like they are Loyal.” (i.e. You cannot use Living Structures to replace a building that you are only treating like it is Loyal. This ability only applies to buildings that are actually Loyal.)

Action

You do not have to use all of the action pips given by your action card (p.8). For example, if you have 3 action pips, you could take only 1 action.

If you convert a standard action into a *new action* (p.20), modifiers of that standard action do not affect the new action itself.

However, if a *new action* contains standard actions, modifiers of those standard action(s) apply, unless explicitly ignored (e.g., [Force Beams](#)).

Some abilities refer to “when you Copy or Pivot to...” followed by an action. These abilities only trigger from spending action pips to Copy or Pivot—it *does not* trigger from Prelude actions.

- An ability that says “When you Copy or Pivot to battle” *does* trigger if you spent a Weapon to let you battle from your Copy or Pivot action pip. (See [Resources](#).)
- You can trigger the ability if you Copy or Pivot to use a *new action* containing the listed standard action. For example, the Nurture action on [Living Structures](#) contains the Tax action, so if you took the Nurture action with a Copy or Pivot, it would trigger an ability that says “If you Copy or Pivot to tax...”

Tax

You can tax a city even if you cannot gain a resource from it. If you tax a Rival city this way, you still gain a Captive (p.12).

Build

You can build even if the corresponding building or ship supply is empty (p.22).

Move

During a **Catapult** move, you have to stop at:

- Any planet (regardless of control)
- A gate that is controlled by a Rival (counted just before your ships move in)

As long as you have not stopped, you may backtrack while dropping off ships. For example, you could Catapult from a planet in cluster 3, drop ships off in gate 3, then in gate 4, then finally stop at a planet in cluster 3.

In the second-printing base rulebook, the Catapult movement rule has been rewritten for clarity. The rule works the same as before.

Battle

The attacker’s Loyal ships in the battle system are all “attacking ships” and can be damaged by self-hits and intercept, even if the attacker doesn’t collect dice for all of them.

You need a legal defender in order to battle.

You can collect zero dice. (p.14).

Secure

You need a legal target to secure—a card in the Court on which you have the most agents.

Resolve the “When Secured” effect of a Vox card before drawing a new card to refill it.

Rewind / Undo

In general, as long as an action or a step does not reveal new information to the acting player, it can be undone with the consent of the table (p.22).

For example, playing an action card reveals the card to other players, but the acting player does not gain new info, so it can be undone with the consent of the table.

Some actions and steps reveal new information and thus cannot be undone:

- **Battle** (after rolling dice, or after the defender uses [Predictive Sensors](#))
- **Secure** (after revealing the next card of the Court deck)
- Declaring an ambition with [Farseers](#) (after seeing a player's hand)
- Mulliganing a hand in a two-player game

Some players might not consent to an undo. For example, if the acting player is collaborating with another player or kingmaking, rewinding can effectively reveal private information to the table (p.22), giving advantage to the person they are helping.

Turn Structure

Here is the turn structure:

1. Play an action card.
2. If you're leading, you may declare an ambition.
If you're not leading, you may seize the initiative.
3. Prelude window begins. You may use the Prelude actions of cards and resources.
4. Prelude window ends. Return spent resources to the supply.
5. Perform actions by spending action pips from your played card.

In theory, once you spend an action pip from the played action card, you cannot use any more Prelude actions. In practice, as long as your actions do not reveal new information (e.g., battle/secure), it is fine to rewind to the Prelude. See [Rewind / Undo](#).

Resources spent during your Prelude only return to the supply at the end of your Prelude (p.20). This means you cannot regain a resource you spent in your Prelude during your same Prelude.

You cannot use Prelude actions on cards that you secured from the Court in the same Prelude (p.20). However, you *can* use non-Prelude parts of the card (e.g., [Mining Interest's](#) Manufacture action) later in the same turn. You can use the Prelude actions on a card if you gain the card in other ways (e.g., steal with [Silver-Tongues](#)).

Passing

The player with initiative may pass the initiative marker to the next player in turn order who has any cards in their hand.

Surpass with a “7”

Surpassing with a “7” seizes the initiative, unless it was already seized. Seizing in this way is not optional (p.10).

Resources

In your Prelude, you can always spend resources without effect, regardless of your Outrage (p.16).

You can rearrange resources in your resource slots when you gain a resource (p.17). You *cannot* rearrange resources when a resource is removed (spent, discarded, stolen, etc.).

The Weapon resource lets you “spend any action pips from your card play to take Battle actions” (p.17). This cannot convert actions from spending other resources, only the actions you take from your played action card.

Destroying a City

When a city is destroyed, the following happens (p.16):

1. Provoke Outrage
2. Ransack the Court
3. Spend keys to steal, if you rolled raid dice and any attacking ships remain

As a result, the Outrage in step 1 does not discard cards you gain from steps 2 and 3.

Replace

Some cards let you **replace** a piece (p.22). This **removes** a piece and also **places** another piece in the same system. You cannot **replace** if the targeted piece cannot be removed or if the corresponding supply to place a piece from is empty. The new piece keeps the same fresh or damaged state as the old piece.

Changelog

December 20, 2024: Edited **Core Rulebook, Page 17, Resources** to further clarify the errata to “but they cannot be stolen in battle unless explicitly allowed.”

August 30, 2024: Edited **Core Rulebook, Page 17, Resources** to include the edit to “They cannot be stolen unless explicitly allowed.” Added “**Like they are Loyal**” section.

July 12, 2024: Added **Core Rulebook, Page 17, Resources** and **Core Rulebook, Page 21** errata, and the **Resources “You Have”** section.

July 11, 2024: Added **Core Rulebook, Page 5, Step Q** errata. This is identical to the errata added on June 17 to the end of the chapter, except to setup as well.

June 17, 2024: Added Errata section with **Core Rulebook, Page 19** errata.

June 14, 2024: Original release