

PTOLEMAEUS

1 to 4 players - from 14 years - 20/50 minutes

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Alexandria, Egypt, 150 AD. Ptolemy, the greatest astronomer of the time, is finishing the Almagest, the treatise that will earn him a place in the history of astronomy. In his work, Ptolemy describes the motion of the Sun and the Moon about the Earth, together with that of the other five known planets: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. Using the Ptolemaic system, it was possible to accurately predict the movement of these seven celestial bodies, providing a reliable guide for navigators for centuries to come. In Ptolemaeus, players are ambitious astronomers trying to prove they can accurately predict the movement of these seven bodies traveling about the earth at different speeds through the Zodiac constellations. Only the sharpest observer of the firmament will be known as Ptolemy's first disciple and help in the writing of the Almagest.

CONTENT

1 game board



8 celestial bodies



1 first player marker (Astrolabe)



65 constellation cards



13 astronomical event cards



25 bonus cards



7 secret objective cards



40 Almagest tokens
12 Asteroid tokens



1 Comet starter position token
1 turn Astrolabe marker token



SETUP

Choose a “starting date” from those listed in the final page of the rulebook. Place the 7 planets on the board following the starting date’s description. For example, if you choose the 20th July 1969 (Apollo XI mission) you must place the planets as follows: SOL in Cancer, LUNA in Libra, MERCURIUS in Cancer, VENUS in Gemini, MARS in Sagittarius, JUPITER in Libra, SATURNUS in Taurus. *Note: a single constellation can have more than one planet placed on it.*

- ① Place the Comet token on the constellation directly opposite to the one Luna is on. If there’s already a planet on that constellation, place the Comet token on the first empty constellation going clockwise. In the 20th July example, the Comet token should be placed on Aries, the constellation opposite to Libra, where the Luna token is.
- ② Place the Comet starting position token on the same constellation as the Comet.
- ③ Place the 12 Asteroid tokens in the 12 spaces around the constellations (one per space).
- ④ Place the Astrolabe token on Turn 1 of the turn track on the game board.
- ⑤ Give each player 10 Almagest tokens of the colour of their choice, and one secret objective card: these tokens, when not on the board, are considered to be in the player’s reserve.
- ⑥ Shuffle the constellation cards and give two to each player; players can look at their cards without revealing them to others. Place the remaining constellation cards near the game board, and place the first six on the table face-up.
- ⑦ Shuffle the bonus cards and place the deck near the game board.
- ⑧ Shuffle the astronomical event cards, place the deck at the centre of the board and reveal the first card by turning it over and placing it on top of the deck. If the revealed card is the Eclipsis, reveal a new card and shuffle the Eclipsis card back into the deck.
- ⑨ Pick a first player and give them the first player marker (the Astrolabe).



GAMEPLAY

The game takes place over a variable number of rounds, each of which is composed of 3 turns. The round's starting player (the one with the Astrolabe) begins the turn, which then proceeds clockwise. On their turn, players can take one (and only one) of the following actions:

A. DRAW 2 constellation cards - B. OBSERVE 1 constellation - C. OBSERVE 1 configuration



After a player has taken their action, their turn ends and passes to the following player going clockwise. When all players have taken their actions, the turn marker moves to the following turn, which begins immediately. Play continues in the same manner until the end of the third turn, which is also the end of that round. Once a round is over, the planets and Comet move according to rules specified below in the «End of Round Phase» section.

A) DRAW 2 constellation cards

The active player can add one face-down card to their hand, drawn from the top of the constellation deck (this is a blind draw), or choose one of the six face-up constellation cards on the table. In the latter case, they must immediately replace the drawn card with a new one, drawing it from the constellation deck and placing it face up. The player can then draw a second card, as above, again choosing either from the deck or the face-up cards.



If, at any moment in the game, including during initial set up, there are 5 face-up constellation cards of the same colour, all 6 must be discarded and another 6 drawn. When the constellation deck has no more cards, reshuffle discarded constellation cards to make a new deck. There are “wildcards” amongst the constellations (showing a sextant): these can replace any other card. A person choosing a wildcard from the revealed cards cannot draw a second card.

B) OBSERVE 1 constellation

This action allows the active player to place one of their Almagest tokens (in the example picture, the green token) on a constellation on the board, as long as there is at least one planet or Comet on that constellation.

To place the token, the player must discard cards in one of the following combinations from their hand:



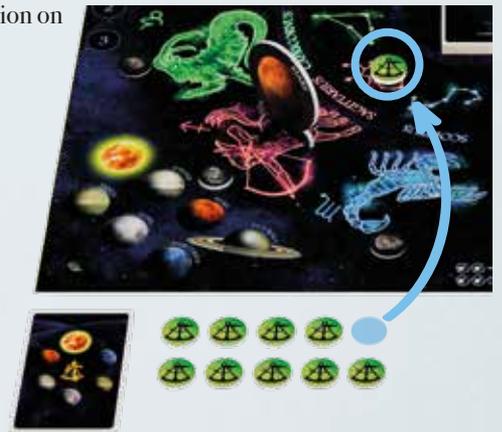
- One constellation card with the same name as the observed constellation (in the example: Sagittarius), *or*



- Two constellation cards of the same colour as the observed constellation (in the example, two red cards: Aries e Leo), *or*



- Three constellation cards of a different colour to the observed constellation. The three discarded cards need to be of the same colour (in the example, three blue cards: Scorpius, Pisces e Cancer).



Note: the last two options above are known as “**alternative combinations**”, and can be made with cards of the same name. For example, the two red cards can be 2 Aries and the three blue cards can be 3 Scorpius, or 2 Pisces and 1 Cancer.

C) OBSERVE 1 configuration

The planets and the Comet can align on the board to form configurations. Observing one configuration allows a player to place several of their Almagest tokens on the board. For each Almagest token placed, the player must discard a card from their hand, or alternative combinations.

The configurations that can be observed are: conjunction, opposition, trine and square.



Conjunction

A configuration in which two or more planets are passing through the same constellation. A player can observe that constellation twice by placing two Almagest tokens and discarding two cards with the same name as the constellation where the conjunction is taking place (or discard alternative combinations).

Note: as specified below, the Comet can never share a constellation with other planets, and as such it can never form a conjunction, though it can form other configurations.

In the example, Luna and Venus are in conjunction over Pisces. The white player places two Almagest tokens on the constellation by discarding two Pisces cards (or alternative combinations).



Opposition

A configuration formed when two or more planets are on 2 constellations that are diametrically opposite. The player can observe both constellations simultaneously by placing two Almagest tokens, one on each constellation, and discarding two cards with the same name as the observed constellations (or alternative combinations).

Note: the opposition configuration can be observed even if formed by one (or more) planet(s) diametrically opposite to the Comet.

Opposing constellations are:

Aries-Libra | Taurus-Scorpius | Gemini-Sagittarius | Cancer-Capricornus | Leo-Aquarius | Virgo-Pisces

In the example, Luna and Venus are in Opposition on Virgo-Pisces. The white player can place two Almagest tokens, one on each constellation, by discarding one Virgo constellation card and one Pisces constellation card (or alternative combinations).



Trine

A configuration formed when three or more planets are on three constellations of the same colour to form a triangle.

A player can observe all three constellations simultaneously by placing three Almagest tokens, one on each constellation, and discarding three constellation cards with the names of the observed constellations (or alternative combinations).

Note: the trine configuration can be observed even if it's formed by two (or more) planets and the Comet.

Constellations which can form a trine are:

Aries-Leo-Sagittarius | Taurus-Virgo-Capricornus | Gemini-Libra-Aquarius | Cancer-Scorpius-Pisces

In the example, Luna, Venus and Sol form a Trine in Cancer-Scorpius-Pisces. The white player places three Almagest tokens, one on each constellation, by playing 1 Cancer constellation card, 1 Scorpius constellation card and 1 Pisces constellation card (or alternative combinations).



Square

A configuration formed when 2 or more planets are on 2 constellations which form a 90 degree angle (that is to say, with another two constellations between them, for example Gemini-Pisces). A player can observe both constellations simultaneously by placing two Almagest tokens, one on each constellation, and discarding two constellation cards with the names of the observed constellations (or alternative combinations).

In the example, Venus and Luna form a Square in Pisces-Gemini. The white player places two tokens, one on each constellation, by playing 1 Pisces constellation card and 1 Gemini constellation card (or alternative combinations).

Note 1: the Square configuration can be observed even if formed by one (or more) planet(s) and the Comet.

Note 2: if a player wishes to observe a constellation or a configuration of planets but they have no more Almagest tokens in their reserve, they can move those already on the board.

STUDYING A PLANET

Observing constellations and configurations allows players to place Almagest tokens, which are then used to study planets on those constellations to obtain victory points.

Studying planets is free (it is not an action) and happens in one of the two following ways:

A) By placing their third Almagest token on a constellation with a planet on it, the player has studied that planet. They have to remove the three tokens from the constellation, place one on the corresponding planet in their study area and the other two in their reserve, available to be used.

B) After having completed their turn, a player can study a planet on a constellation where two of their Almagest tokens are present, as long as they have at least another 2 Almagest tokens anywhere else on the board. The player removes two tokens from the constellation and another two tokens from anywhere on the board (for a total of four Almagest tokens). They then place one token in their study area on top of the planet they have studied, and the other three tokens in their reserve, available to be used again.

Note: in the first case the study of the planet is mandatory, in the second one it's the player's choice.

A player can study a planet (for example Mars) only once per game, and a planet is studied immediately once the third token is placed on the constellation it's on. **No actions which break this rule are allowed.**

If two or more planets are on a constellation when a player places their third Almagest token on it, they must choose only one to study. A player can study more than one planet per turn if they are capable of doing so.

On constellations where all planets present are studied by a player, that player can place up to two Almagest tokens, but not a third.

A player can observe a constellation or a configuration that has a planet they have studied on it (and thus place tokens on it), but they may only place the third Almagest token if there is also a planet they have not studied on the constellation. Placing the third Almagest token immediately studies the unstudied planet.

The Comet is not a planet and as such cannot be studied. A player thus cannot place more than two tokens in the constellation where the Comet is present. The Almagest tokens placed observing the Comet can nonetheless be used later to study planets, according to the rules explained above.

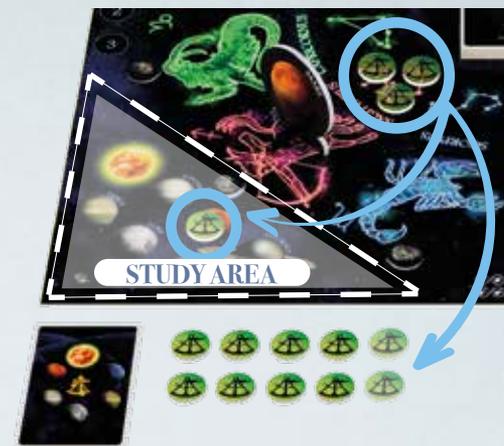
Asteroid tokens

When a player studies a planet, they can pick up the Asteroid token present on the constellation and place it in their study area (only if the Asteroid token is present). During their turn, a player can choose to discard two Asteroid tokens (remove them from their study area and from the game) to draw a bonus card. Every three Asteroid tokens in a player's study area at the end of the game are worth one victory point for that player.



Secret objectives

Every player has one secret objective card with three planets indicated on it. The player will receive one extra victory point at the end of the game if they have studied two of these planets, or three points if they have studied all three.



BONUS CARDS

When a player studies a planet, they draw one bonus card from the bonus deck and add it to their hand. During their turn a player can play all bonus cards in their hand, even the ones they have just drawn. If the bonus card deck runs out, players simply don't receive bonus cards anymore. The bonus cards are:



NOVA LUNA

Choose an opponent's Almagest token on the board. Swap this token for one of yours (taken from your reserve). If you have studied «Luna», swap two Almagest tokens instead (you can choose one token from two different players, or two tokens from one player). Opponent's tokens return to their reserve.



MERCURIUS RETROGRADUS

Move one of your Almagest tokens from one constellation to another, even if the second constellation has no planets or the Comet on it. If you have studied «Mercurius», move two of your tokens.



VENUS RETROGRADA

Draw one card from the constellation deck or from those face-up on the table. If you have studied «Venus», you can draw two cards either from the deck or those on the table (1 each or 2 from a single location). With this bonus card you can pick two wildcards.



SOL IN MEDIO CAELI

Play one additional turn. If you have studied «Sol», play two additional turns instead.



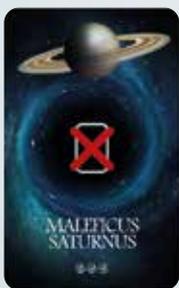
MALEFICUS MARS

Each opponent chooses and retrieves one of their Almagest tokens from the board and places it in their reserve. If you have studied «Mars», each opponent retrieves two tokens instead.



IUPITER ORIENTALIS

Draw one random constellation card from another player's hand. If you have studied «Iupiter», you can draw two cards (either both from the same player or one from two different players).



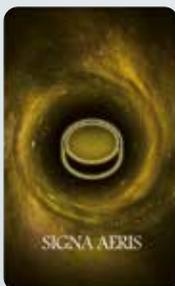
MALEFICUS SATURNUS

Each opponent chooses and discards one constellation card from their hand. If you have studied «Saturnus», they discard two cards instead.



NOVA CONSTELLATIO

This card is worth 1 victory point.



SIGNA AERIS, AQUAE, IGNIS, TERRAE

Place one token from your reserve on to a constellation of the indicated colour.

END OF ROUND PHASE

At the end of each round, resolve the following steps in order:

1. Move the three planets shown on the face-up astronomical event card one constellation clockwise, and then the Comet by one constellation clockwise. The astronomical event card is then discarded.

1A) If the Comet lands on a constellation where a planet is present, keep moving the Comet in a clockwise direction until it lands on an empty constellation.

1B) If the Comet lands on an empty constellation where player tokens are present, those tokens return to their players' reserves. Moving planets have no effect on tokens already on the board.

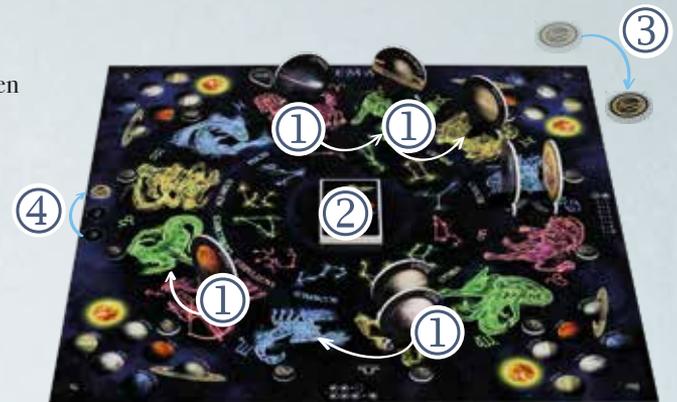
2. Reveal a new astronomical event card and place it on top of the deck.

2A) If the revealed card is the Eclipsis, all Almagest tokens on constellations without planets return to their respective players' reserves. Each player then discards two constellation cards from their hand. The Eclipsis card is then removed from the game and a new astronomical event card is revealed.

3. The first player marker (the Astrolabe) moves to the next player in a clockwise direction.

4. Place the Astrolabe token on Turn 1 - a new round begins.

Note: every planet displays the maximum number of times it can move during a game (that is, if all astronomical event cards were revealed). For example Mars will move at most four times during the course of a game.



END OF GAME

The game ends when one of the following conditions are met:

A) A player accumulates 12 victory points: the game ends and that player is immediately declared the winner.

B) The Comet has completed its revolution around the 12 constellations, finishing on the constellation from whence it began (marked by the Comet starting position token) or beyond it with the last movement. Each player adds up their victory points and the one with most is the winner. In case of a draw, the tie is broken by whoever has studied most planets. If that also results in a draw, the player with the most Almagest tokens placed on constellations wins.

	
1 = 1	
2 = 2	
3 = 4	
4 = 5	
5 = 6	
6 = 8	
7 = 10	

Players can obtain victory points in the following ways:

1. By studying planets, according to the table (e.g. 6 planets = 8 points);

2. Via bonus cards;

3. Via Asteroid tokens: 1 point for every 3 tokens in a player's study area;

4. By achieving their secret objective: one point if they studied any two of the three planets shown on their "secret objective" card, or three points if they managed to study all three.