

KEYFORGE

CALL OF THE ARCHONS

QUICKSTART

GAME DESIGN by RICHARD GARFIELD

WELCOME TO THE CRUCIBLE...

You are an Archon. Hailed by some as a god, respected by others for your wisdom, you were born—or perhaps created—on the Crucible, a world in which anything is possible.

The Crucible is ancient, but ever renewed. An artificial planet hanging in the center of the universe, the Crucible's many layers remain constantly under construction by the enigmatic and mischievous Architects. For raw materials, the Architects have harvested countless worlds, blending them into a new whole both familiar and alien to the creatures that dwell there.

Whether lone specimens or entire cultures, the beings brought to the Crucible find themselves in a strange wonderland with no obvious means of returning to their former homes. Some thrive, building new societies and developing new technologies with the aid of the mysterious psychic substance known as Æmber. Some discard the trappings of their old lives, adopting the ways and customs of new tribes discovered in this new world. Others devolve, bodies and minds twisted beyond all recognition, incorporating Æmber into their very bodies.

As an Archon, you have gathered followers in your journeys throughout the Crucible, allies who find value in your ageless wisdom and your ability to speak to all creatures. With the aid of these allies, you seek out Vaults hidden throughout the Crucible by the cryptic Architects. Each Vault can only be unlocked by Æmber-forged keys. Once open, a Vault's contents—the power and knowledge of the Architects—can be consumed by only a single Archon.

When two Archons discover a Vault, only one can gain its knowledge. Only one can move one step closer to the secret of the Crucible...

OVERVIEW

KeyForge is a two-player card game in which each player takes the role of an Archon, and leads that Archon's deck against their opponent.

A player's deck represents a team that is attempting to gain Æmber and forge keys. The first player to gather three keys is able to unlock a Vault and win the game.

The defining feature of KeyForge is that no two decks are alike. This is not a trading card game—you cannot craft a deck. Rather, each deck must remain as it is. Every deck in existence is unique!

The goal of this Quickstart is to get you playing as soon as possible. The best way to learn the game is to dive right in! Set up the game using the following instructions. Then, read the rest of this Quickstart and begin your first game.

SETUP

One player takes the Miss “Onyx” Censorius deck, and the other player takes the Radiant Argus the Supreme deck. Unlike other KeyForge decks, these decks have been designed specifically to teach you the game.

Each deck is led by an Archon, whose name is on the deck's identity card (shown below). All the cards in the deck are marked with that Archon's name.

Each player places their identity card on the table in front them, shuffles their deck, and places it next to their identity card. Three key tokens are placed near each player's deck with the unforged side faceup.



Place all Æmber tokens, damage tokens, and status cards within easy reach of both players to create the common supply.



Randomly determine a player to take the first turn. This may be done by flipping a coin. **The first player draws seven cards, and the other player draws six cards.**

The players are now ready to begin the game.

WINNING THE GAME

The goal of the game is to forge three keys, which are represented by key tokens.

Each player begins the game with three unforged key tokens. When a key is forged, flip one token to its forged side.



If a player has six Æmber at the start of their turn, that player **must** spend that Æmber to forge one key. The first player to forge all three of their keys wins the game.

HOW TO PLAY

To play a game of KeyForge, players alternate taking turns until a player wins the game by forging three keys. While a player is taking a turn, they are the **active player**. During a turn, the active player performs five steps in order, each of which is described in this section.

STEP ONE: FORGE A KEY

The cost to forge a key is six Æmber. During this step, if the active player has six (or more) Æmber in their Æmber pool (on their identity card), they **must** spend six Æmber to forge a key. The active player places spent Æmber in the common supply and flips one of their unforged key tokens so the forged side is faceup.

No more than one key can be forged during this step each turn. If the active player does not have enough Æmber to forge a key, nothing occurs during this step.



STEP TWO: CHOOSE A HOUSE

Each identity card shows the three houses that make up its deck. During this step, the active player chooses one of these three houses and activates it. The chosen house is the **active house** for the remainder of the turn. The active player will only be able to play and use cards of the active house this turn, so choose carefully!



The three houses of a deck are displayed on its identity card.

STEP THREE: PLAY, DISCARD, AND USE CARDS OF THE ACTIVE HOUSE

This is the step during which most of the game is played.

During this step, the active player may **play**, **use**, and/or **discard from hand** any number of cards that belong to the active house (chosen during step two). Eligible cards may be played, used, and/or discarded in any order.

Rules for playing, using, and discarding cards are described on the other side of this sheet.

First Turn Rule: During the first player's first turn, that player may play or discard from hand **only one card** of the active house.

STEP FOUR: READY CARDS

During this step, the active player readies all of their exhausted cards.

All cards in play exist in one of two states: ready or exhausted. Generally, a card must be ready for a player to use it. Using a card typically causes it to become exhausted. The “ready cards” step is when the active player gets to ready their cards for their following turn.



STEP FIVE: DRAW CARDS

During this step, the active player draws cards from the top of their deck until they have six cards in their hand. If the active player already has six or more cards in their hand, no cards are drawn at this time. If a player needs to draw but has no cards remaining in their deck, that player shuffles their discard pile to create a new deck and continues drawing.

If the active player has enough Æmber on their identity card to forge a key, they announce “**Check!**” to their opponent, so that their opponent knows they are able to forge a key at the beginning of their next turn.

After this step, the active player's turn is over. The other player becomes the active player and takes their turn, beginning with step one.

QUICK REFERENCE

A turn sequence and icon key are provided here for easy reference.

TURN SEQUENCE

- 1 Forge a key.
- 2 Choose a house.
- 3 Play, discard, and use cards of the chosen house.
- 4 Ready cards.
- 5 Draw cards.

ICONS

Æmber

Damage



Chain Tracker Card



Chain Tracker Token

ADDITIONAL COMPONENT: CHAIN TRACKER

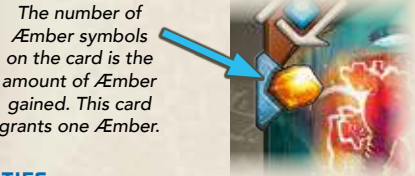
The components pictured here are not used for the learning game. When playing with unique KeyForge decks, **chains** may be used as a handicapping mechanic, and are sometimes required as an additional cost for certain card abilities. The card pictured to the right can be used to track the number of chains a player has at any given time. The complete rules for chains can be found in the online rulebook at: **KeyForgeGame.com**.

PLAYING CARDS

During step three of their turn, the active player can play any number of cards that belong to the active house.

ÆMBER BONUS

Many cards have an Æmber bonus in the upper-left corner. When a card with an Æmber bonus is played, the **first** thing the active player does is gain that much Æmber. Each time a player gains Æmber (for any reason), the Æmber is placed in their Æmber pool (on that player's identity card).



PLAY ABILITIES

Some cards have a bold **“Play:”** ability. Such abilities resolve after the card's Æmber bonus is collected, if it has any, and immediately after the card enters play.

ENTERING PLAY EXHAUSTED

When a creature or artifact enters play, it enters **play exhausted**. This means that generally a player will not be able to use a card during the same turn that it is played.

CARD TYPES

There are four types of cards that appear in decks: action cards, artifacts, upgrades, and creatures. There are different rules for how each type is played.



Action cards: When an action card is played, the active player resolves the card's **“Play:”** ability, and then places the card in their discard pile.

Artifacts: When an artifact is played, the active player places it in their play area behind their battleline (see **Creatures**). Artifacts enter play exhausted, but they remain in play from turn to turn.

Upgrades: When an upgrade is played, the active player chooses a creature and attaches the upgrade to that creature, placing it beneath (slightly overlapped by) the creature. Each upgrade remains in play from turn to turn and modifies the card to which it is attached.

If the card to which an upgrade is attached leaves play, the upgrade is discarded.



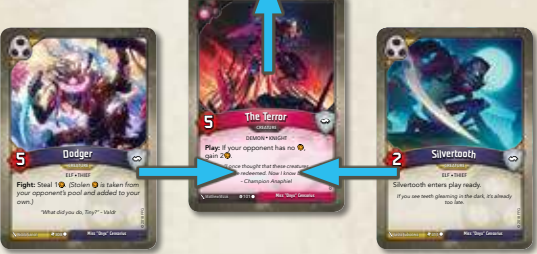
The “Protect the Weak” upgrade is attached to the “Champion Anaphiel” creature.

Creatures: Creatures enter play exhausted, in a line known as the **battleline**. This line is a row of creatures in front of the player. Each time a creature enters play, it must be placed on a flank — at the far left or the far right of its controller's battleline. Creatures remain in play from turn to turn.



When the “Bad Penny” creature is played, it is placed on the flank of the battleline.

If a creature leaves play, gaps in the battleline are removed by shifting the line inward.



When the “The Terror” creature leaves play, the battleline is shifted inward.

DISCARDING CARDS

During step three of their turn, the active player can discard from their hand any number of cards of the active house. This lets the player remove cards they do not want to play, freeing up space to draw new cards at the end of the turn.

THE DISCARD PILE

Any time a card is discarded (or destroyed), for any reason, it is placed in its owner's discard pile. This is a faceup pile of cards next to that player's deck.

USING CARDS

During step three of their turn, the active player can use any number of cards of the active house that they have in play.

Creature cards can be used to reap, to initiate their action ability, or to fight. Generally, upgrade and artifact cards can only be used to initiate their action ability.

REAPING

Any ready creature of the active house may be used to reap.

When a creature is used to reap, exhaust the card. Then, its controller gains one Æmber from the common supply and resolves all of the creature's **“Reap:”** abilities if it has any.

INITIATING ACTION ABILITIES

Any ready card of the active house may be used to initiate its **“Action:”** ability, if it has one. To use a card's **“Action:”** ability, exhaust the card and resolve the described effect.

If a card is already exhausted, its **“Action:”** ability cannot be initiated.

CARD ABILITIES

To resolve a card's ability, a player follows the instructions described on the card. When resolving a card ability, resolve as much of the ability as possible. Many cards in the starter decks contain reminder text to assist new players in learning the most important terminology in the game.

If the text of a card directly contradicts the text of the rules, the text of the card takes precedence.

FIGHTING

Any ready creature of the active house may be used to fight.

When a creature is used to fight, exhaust the card. Then, its controller chooses one creature controlled by the opponent as the target of the attack. A creature cannot fight if there is no enemy creature that can be targeted by the attack.

Each of the two creatures deals an amount of damage (which is explained later) equal to its power to the other creature. All damage from a fight is dealt simultaneously.

After the fight resolves, if the attacking creature survives the fight, resolve all of that creature's **“Fight:”** abilities.

Damage

If a creature is dealt damage (for any reason), place an amount of damage on the creature equal to the amount of damage dealt. If a creature has an amount of damage on it equal to or greater than its power total, the creature is destroyed and placed in its owner's discard pile. If a creature has an armor value (to the right of a card's title), the armor prevents that much incoming damage each turn. A “~” symbol indicates that the creature has no armor.



Example: Tom, who has activated house Sanctum this turn, decides to fight using Raiding Knight (power 4). He exhausts Raiding Knight and chooses one of his opponent's creatures, Tocsin (power 3). Raiding Knight deals 4 damage to Tocsin, and Tocsin tries to deal 3 damage to Raiding Knight, but 2 of this damage is prevented by Raiding Knight's armor. The dealt damage is placed on the two creatures simultaneously. As Tocsin only has 3 power and now has 4 damage on it, it is destroyed and placed in its owner's discard pile. Raiding Knight remains in play with 1 damage on it.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Now that you have read the Quickstart and have a basic understanding of the rules, try a game using the introductory decks. After completing this game, check out the online Rulebook at **KeyForgeGame.com** to answer any questions you might have—some cards in the unique Archon decks might require looking up rules in that document. The Rulebook also contains an introduction to the KeyForge setting and a description of the different houses.

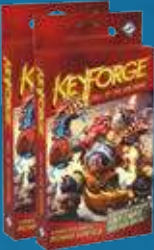
THE UNIQUE DECK GAME

Playing the game with the Miss “Onyx” Censorius and Radiant Argus the Supreme decks is only the beginning of your adventure. *KeyForge* is a Unique Deck Game (UDG) in which every deck is unique, and your *KeyForge* starter set also comes with two unique Archon decks.

Each of these is a one-of-a-kind deck that is ready to play as soon as you open it. These decks can be played against one another, against the learning decks, or against your friends' decks. As no two decks are alike, every game is different!

Additional Archon decks are sold separately, and each deck adds a greater variety of possibilities to your collection. There are more than 350 different cards in the initial *KeyForge* card pool. With each deck, you will discover a new and singular mix of cards, tactics, and strategic potential.

Should you seek even greater competition, *KeyForge* tournaments and championship events are sanctioned and supported by Fantasy Flight Games Organized Play. Find us online at: **KeyForgeGame.com**.



Two Unique Call of the Archons Decks



Call of the Archons Display

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KeyForge: Call of the Archons Starter Set
KF01
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