

Chartalea

A DECK-BUILDING AND DICE-ROLLING DUELING GAME



Rule Book

CHARTALEA






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OVERVIEW

Chartalea is a **deck-building** and **dice-rolling** game for **2 players**.

Players assume the roles of powerful **Gods** from  **Greek**,  **Egypt**,  **Mayan** or  **Norse Mythology**. Each player starts the game with 50  *Health Points* and their personal deck which consists of 10 cards. (7 basic starting cards and 3 unique God-specific starting cards).







On your turn, you play cards from your hand, roll and manipulate dice and perform **Divine Powers**, all in order to gain resources:

- **Money** [] which lets you **Acquire** cards from the **Market Row**
- **Attack** [] which can be used to Attack your opponents and their **Companions**, or to defeat **Monsters**
- **Health** [] which lets you replenish your Health Point total
- **Defense** [] which can be used to prevent incoming damage
- **Power** [] which can be spent to perform **Divine Powers**

The game can be won in one of 2 ways:

- Path of War: **knock your opponent down to zero Health**
- Path of Wisdom: obtain and **activate the 4 Mythic Scrolls**

COMPONENTS

- **Cards:**
 - **2 Starting Decks**, each consisting of these 7 cards: “Coin”, “Lucky Coin”, “Flaming Coin”, “Chalice of Fate”, “Collect Offering”, “Strike” and “Channel”
 - **4 Gods** (1 per Mythology: Greek, Egypt, Maya, Norse), each with an oversized Character Card and 3 custom starting cards
 - **124 unique Market Deck cards:** 32 Items, 36 Actions, 20 🙋 Companions, 8 🎲 Curses, 12 🛡️ Guarded, 8 🗑️ Lost cards and 8 Omni cards.
 - **13 🗿 Monster cards** (3 per Mythology + “Phoenix”)
 - **8 Mythic Scroll cards** (2 copies of each)
 - **36 Treasure cards**
- **20 Custom Dice:**
 - 4 yellow **Money Dice** 
 - 4 red **Attack Dice** 
 - 4 green **Health Dice** 
 - 4 blue **Defense Dice** 
 - 4 white **Power Dice** 
- **25 Power gems**
- **4 Divine Intervention tokens** 

Disclaimer:

These are all non-final prototype components for play-testing purposes. We do not own the rights to any of the temporary placeholder artwork. The authors of all copyrighted artwork or pictures used in this prototype are listed on the bottom of each card.

GAME SETUP

Randomly determine a start player. Players **pick a God** they want to play as (the second player gets first choice), and put the corresponding **Character Card** in front of them, along with a **Divine Powers** reference card. It is recommended (but not required) that both players pick a God from a *different Mythology*.

Players construct their **starting deck of 10 cards**:





“Coin”,
“Lucky Coin”,
“Flaming Coin” and
“Chalice of Fate”



“Collect Offering”,
“Strike” and
“Channel”



and 3 **God-specific**
starting cards

Shuffle the 124 Market cards to form a face down **Market Deck**. Flip the top **5** cards of the Market Deck face up in a center row between both players to form the **Market Row**. If any of these cards are **GUARDED**  by a  Monster, shuffle them back into the Market Deck and replace them with another card.

Place the **Phoenix** Monster card near the Market Row. Keep the rest of the **Monster Deck** in reach. You don't need to shuffle the Monster Deck.

Shuffle the **Treasure cards** and place them in a face down stack near the Monster Deck.

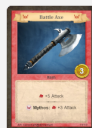
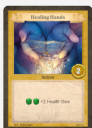
Place the **power gems** and **dice** in the center of the table, where they can be reached by all players.

20 Dice

Power gems



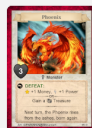
Market
Deck



5-card Market Row



Monster
Deck



Phoenix
Deck



Treasure
Deck

Give each player the **Divine Intervention token** of their corresponding Mythology. Players now shuffle their starting deck and place it next to them. This deck is also referred to as their Draw Deck.

The **first player** draws a starting **hand of 3 cards** from their personal Draw Deck. The **second player** draws a starting **hand of 5 cards**.

You're all set to start the game now. The first player may take their turn!

HEALTH TRACKING

Players start with 50 ♥ Health Points, and need to keep track of their Health Points during the game. To do this, you could use:




- pen and paper
- countdown dice
- a third party point tracker mobile app, like Simple Points Tracker
- the official Chartalea mobile app:

<http://app.chartalea.com/> (under construction)

TURN STRUCTURE


















A turn is broken up into 5 phases: the Danger Phase, Main Phase, Attack Phase, Cleanup Phase and finally the Draw Phase.



1. Danger Phase

In the Danger Phase, the  **DANGER** effects of all  **Monsters** that are lurking in the Market Row get resolved. A Monster's danger effect persists until the Monster is defeated (or banished). Next, the effects of all  **Curses** in your play area get activated.

2. Main Phase

During your Main Phase, you may perform any of the following actions, as many times as you want (*unless indicated otherwise*), in any order:

- **Play cards** from your hand to gain resources [   ], add dice [   ] to your Dice Pool and other card effects
- **Exhaust** (rotate 90° sideways) any prepared  **Companions** or  **Artifacts** to activate their  **effect**
- Activate one or more of your  **Mythic Scrolls**
- Use one or more of your  **Treasures**
- Roll and manipulate your **Dice Pool** (*only once per turn!*)
- Spend **Money** [] to Acquire new cards (*or inflict a Curse*) from the Market Row
- Use **Attack** [] to destroy Companions or defeat Monsters
- Use **Health** [] to replenish your Health Point total
- Use **Power** [] to perform a Divine Power (*only once per turn!*)

Note that **Defense** [] and Defense Dice  do not have any effect during a player's Main Phase.



The Main Phase actions mentioned above are explained in more detail in the chapter “Main Phase Actions” on page 10.

3. Attack Phase

Any **Attack** [👊] remaining from the Main Phase can be used in the Attack Phase to **target your opponent directly**. Your opponent may reveal **Shields from their hand**, gaining them **Defense** [🛡️] and / or Defense Dice 🎲 (which they now roll to gain 🛡️). They reduce incoming 👊 by the amount of 🛡️ gained. Finally, any remaining 👊 not prevented by 🛡️ is subtracted from the opponent's ❤️ Health Point total. The opponent returns the revealed shields back to their hand, and can still play them for their other effects on their next turn.



*Note that only Shields **from your hand** can be revealed.*

Shield effects on Companions in your play area do not trigger.

4. Cleanup Phase

During your Cleanup Phase:

- You may **Dispel** one or more **Curses**.
- Place all the cards you played this turn into your **Discard Pile**. Companions, Artifacts and non-Dispelled Curses remain in Play!
- Place all unplayed cards from your hand into your Discard Pile.
- **Prepare** all exhausted Companions, Artifacts and Scrolls in your play area, so they are ready to be used again on your next turn.
- Prepare the Phoenix Monster if you defeated it this turn.

5. Draw Phase

During your Draw Phase, you **draw a new hand of 5 cards** from your Draw Deck, and then your turn ends. Play passes to your opponent.


If at any point in the game you need to draw or reveal cards from your Draw Deck and it is empty, shuffle all the cards in your Discard Pile and place it face-down to form your new Draw Deck. Then continue drawing or revealing the remaining amount of cards.

MAIN PHASE ACTIONS

Play a card

During your Main Phase, you'll play cards from your hand. Put these cards face up in your play area. You are free to choose the order in which you resolve the card effects. Any unused card effects may also be used later in the turn. Additionally, any conditional card effects might get triggered retroactively later in the turn, once their condition is met.

Items and **Actions** get played for their effects. Items typically gain a fixed amount of resources, while Actions gain a variable amount of resources (by adding Dice to your Dice Pool).


Companions are played just like Items and Actions, with the exception that they remain in play at the end of your turn. They can be used each turn for their  **exhaust** effect.

If a card effect ever contradicts with the general rules in this rulebook, follow the card effect instead.



See the chapter “**Card Effects**” on page 22 for a more comprehensive description of the various card effects.

Use a Companion or Artifact

To use a Companion or Artifact for their  **exhaust** effect, turn the card sideways to indicate it has been used. At the end of your turn, you will **prepare** all your exhausted Companions and Artifacts (turn upright) so they are ready to be used again on your next turn.

Companions stay in play until they are destroyed by an opponent. Artifacts typically stay in play indefinitely.



For more info on Companions and Artifacts, have a look at their corresponding section in the chapter “**Card Types**” on page 15.

Roll and manipulate your Dice Pool

During your Main Phase, card effects may gain you Dice that are added to your Dice Pool for that turn.

- **Money Dice** [🟡] with 0/1/1/2/2/3 **Money** [★] on each side
- **Attack Dice** [🔴] with 0/1/2/2/3/4 **Attack** [👊] on each side
- **Health Dice** [🟢] with 0/1/2/2/3/4 **Health** [❤️] on each side
- **Power Dice** [⚪] with 0/1/1/2/2/3 **Power** [⚡] on each side
- **Defense Dice** [🔵] from Shields are not used during this phase!

It is important to note that **you only get to roll and manipulate your Dice Pool once per turn!**

There are only 4 dice available of each type. If you gain more than the available amount of dice, these are referred to as **excess dice**. Each excess die gains you a fixed +1 bonus for that resource. For example, if you gained 6 🔴 Attack Dice on your turn, you only get to roll 4 of them. But you gain a bonus of 👊 +2 Attack because of the two excess dice.

Once you have gathered your Dice Pool, you **roll your dice all at once**. After this initial roll, your **opponent** has the opportunity to spend their **Divine Intervention** token to force you to reroll all your dice.

Now, you may use any **die manipulation effects** or powers to improve the result of your roll. You may also choose to spend your own **Divine Intervention** token to reroll *all* your dice.



You only have one Divine Intervention token. Use it wisely!

This now ends your roll for this turn. If you happen to gain extra dice later in your turn, these are treated just like excess dice (fixed +1 bonus). Any extra dice manipulation effects gained later in your turn are wasted.

Gain resources

Throughout your Main Phase, you will be playing cards and rolling dice which will gain you the following resources:




- **Money** [★] goes to your Money Pool, which can be used at any time during your Main Phase to Acquire new cards from the Market Row. Unspent Money does *not* carry over to the next turn.
- **Attack** [👊] goes to your Attack Pool, which can be used during your Main Phase to destroy Companions or defeat Monsters. Use all remaining 👊 to target your opponent in the Attack Phase.
- **Health** [♥] can be used to replenish your Health Point total. Increase your Health Points with the amount of ♥ gained. *Players cannot exceed their initial starting health!*
- **Power** [⚡] gets you Power gems. Take Power gems from the supply equal to the amount of ⚡ gained and add them to your personal stash. You may spend them to activate card effects, or to perform a Divine Power (once per turn). You may keep any unspent ⚡ Power gems, they carry over to the next turn and can be used later on in the game.
- **Defense** [🛡] from Shields do not have any effect during your Main Phase. They are used to defend against attacks on your opponent's turn.

Acquire a card

You may spend ★ from your Money Pool during your Main Phase to Acquire one or more new Item, Action or Companion cards from the Market Row. Spend ★ equal to the card's cost. Market card costs range from 1 to 7. Place the Acquired card into your **Discard Pile**, and immediately refill the empty slot with the top card from the Market Deck.



Certain cards allow you to interact with your Discard Pile. Acquired cards are placed into your Discard Pile. Timing is key!

If the empty market slot is replaced by a **GUARDED**  card, retrieve its corresponding  Monster from the Monster Deck and put it on top of the card, covering the top half (keeping the card effects of the guarded card visible). Place a random Treasure face-down on the card. Resolve the Monster's  **DANGER** effect immediately when it enters the Market Row.




Inflict a Curse

When you Acquire a **Curse** from the Market Row, it does not go into your Discard Pile. Instead, it is inflicted upon your opponent by placing it in their play area. At the start of each of their turns, your opponent will suffer the effects of the Curse until they manage to Dispel it.



*See “**Curses**” on page 17.*





Destroy a Companion




During your Main Phase, you may spend  from your Attack Pool to destroy Companions. To destroy a Companion, spend  equal to its  strength. The destroyed Companion is placed into its owner's **Discard Pile**.



See “**Companions**” on page 16.

Defeat a Monster


During your Main Phase, you may spend  from your Attack Pool to defeat Monsters. To defeat a Monster, spend  equal to its  strength. When you defeat a Monster, you gain its  **DEFEAT** effect (typically an Artifact which is put in play immediately) and a Treasure. Place the defeated Monster back into the Monster Deck and refill the empty slot in the Market Row.

Once per turn, you may also defeat the “Phoenix”, spending 3  to either gain  +1 Money and  +1 Power, or to gain a Treasure.



See “**Monsters**”, “**Phoenix**” and “**Artifacts**” on page 17-18.

Use a Divine Power

Once per turn, you may spend  Power to use a “Divine Power”. The Divine Powers are listed on your Character Card, together with their cost. There are general Divine Powers that are common to all players, as well as some unique Divine Powers that are specific to your God.



See “**Character Cards**” on page 20-21.

CARD TYPES

Items

Item cards (*hammer icon in top-left corner*) typically gain a fixed amount of resources.

This “Viking Treasure” item card has a cost of 3. When played, you gain ★ +3 Money. Additionally, this card gives a discount of 1 for the next Norse card you acquire.



Actions

Action cards (*hand icon in top-left corner*) typically gain a variable amount of resources, by adding dice to your Dice Pool for that turn.

When you play the “Healing Hands” action card, two Health Dice are added to your Dice Pool. When you roll your dice, you will gain ♥ Health accordingly.





Shields

Shield cards can be used on your opponent’s turn to **reduce incoming damage**. Reveal any number of shields **from your hand** when you are about to take damage, to reduce it by the amount of ♠ generated. Shields cannot prevent damage to your Companions. Do not discard Shields when you use them this way. They remain in your hand and you can play them for their other effects on your next turn.




Companions

Unlike Items and Actions, Companions **stay in play** from turn to turn. They only go to your Discard Pile when they get **destroyed** by your opponent (by dealing  attack equal to its  strength, or by specific card effects). Damage dealt to a Companion is not tracked and does not carry over to the next turn.

This “Amazon” Companion has a strength of 3. When you use this Companion, two Attack Dice are added to your Dice Pool.



Most Companions have an  **exhaust** effect that can be used once per turn. To exhaust a Companion, turn it sideways to indicate it has been used. At the end of your turn, **prepare** all your Companions so they are ready to be used again on your next turn.



There are some card effects that let you exhaust an opponent’s Companion. This means they won’t be able to use it on their next turn because Companions only prepare at the end of the turn.

Some Companions also have the **Guard** keyword. These Guards prevent your opponent from dealing damage to you and your other non-Guard Companions. They will need to destroy the Guard(s) first.



Omni cards

These cards belong to two or more different Mythologies, and are considered as such for any card effects that check the Mythology of a card.

This “Treasure Map” is both a Maya card and a Norse card. It also has some additional Mythos effects for both of these Mythologies.



Curses

Curse cards (green border) do not go into your own deck when you Acquire them. Instead, they are **placed in the play area of your opponent**. Curses have a **negative effect** that is triggered in the **Danger Phase** of the opponent's turn. The Curse can be **Dispelled** (typically at the end of the turn) by meeting a certain Curse-specific criteria.

When you are inflicted with the "Mummy's Curse", you lose ⚡ 2 Power in your Danger Phase. You can Dispel the curse at the end of your turn by sacrificing a Treasure.

Guarded cards and Artifacts

There are some cards in the Market Row that are **GUARDED** (👁️) by a 👁️ **Monster**. When such a card is revealed, retrieve its corresponding Monster from the Monster deck and place it on top of the guarded card. Also place a Treasure on top of the Monster. You gain the guarded card and the Treasure by defeating this Monster.



Most of these guarded cards are Artifacts (orange border). With the exception of some rare card effects that can destroy Artifacts, these cards **stay in play indefinitely**. Most Artifacts have an ⚡ **exhaust** effect that can be used once per turn (just like Companions).

With "Andvari's Ring", you can obtain a Treasure for the cost of ⚡ 1 Power. To obtain this Artifact, you'll first need to defeat the Monster "Fafnir".



Note that Curses and Artifacts in your play area can also trigger Mythos effects, just like Companions!



Monsters

When a **GUARDED** card is revealed in the Market Row, its corresponding Monster card (red border) is retrieved from the Monster Deck and placed on top of the guarded card. All Monsters have a **DANGER** effect that is resolved immediately when they appear in the Market Row. Additionally, this danger effect is also resolved at the start of each turn in the Danger Phase.

Players can defeat a Monster by dealing equal to its strength. When they do so, they gain its **DEFEAT** effect (typically an Artifact which is put in play immediately) and a Treasure.

The "Fafnir" Monster above guards "Andvari's Ring".

When this Monster is revealed, the highest cost card should be banished from the Market Row immediately. Then, if "Fafnir" is still in play at the start of the next player's turn, the highest cost card should be banished from the Market Row once again, and so on...

When a player defeats "Fafnir" by dealing 6 to it, they may put "Andvari's Ring" in play and they also receive a Treasure. The Artifact can be used on that same turn.

Place the defeated Monster back into the Monster Deck.

Phoenix

The "Phoenix" is a special type of Monster that is **always available**. It has a strength of 3 and does not have a danger effect.

Once per turn, you may defeat the Phoenix in order to:

- gain +1 Money and +1 Power
- or gain a random Treasure





Treasures

Treasures can be obtained by defeating Monsters, or by other card effects. These Treasures contain various bonus effects, which can be used during your Main Phase.

This “Mayan Gold” Treasure can be used during your Main Phase in order to Acquire a Maya card with cost 5 or less from the Market Row for free. Once used, this Treasure is taken out of the game.

Lost cards

Lost cards grant an additional bonus effect if you are playing as a specific God.

When you play “Athena’s Olive Tree”, instead of choosing between ⭐ +3 Money and ❤️ +5 Health, you gain both IF you are playing as Athena.



Other lost cards may require a God of a certain Mythology instead of a specific God.

The “Sphinx Equinox” lost card gains a bonus effect for Egyptian Gods: when they play this card, they may put an Egypt card from the discard pile on top of their draw deck.

Character Cards

Each God has their own Character Card. This card lists all the general Divine Powers (that are available to all players), as well as the Divine Powers that are unique to that specific Character.

It also lists the unique **Passive Skill** of that Character.

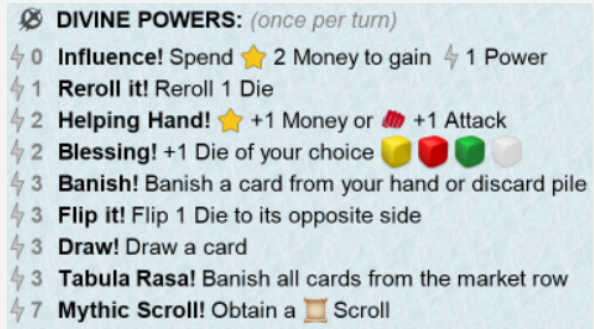


Athena is the Greek Goddess of Wisdom. Her Passive Skill “Vigor!” allows her to perform an additional Divine Power each turn (instead of the normal 1 per turn).

Her Divine Powers “Prophecy!”, “Premeditation” and “Inspiration!” allow her to perform some nifty card manipulation effects.

Here's a closer look at the full list of all general Divine Powers.

Once per turn, you may spend the listed amount of ⚡ Power to perform a Divine Power.



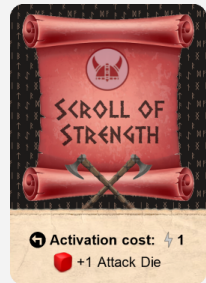
For example, on your turn you may spend 3 ⚡ Power to perform the Divine Power **"Flip it!"**, which lets you flip 1 Die to its opposite side.

There is also a **free** Divine Power called **"Influence!"**, which allows you to spend 2 ★ Money to gain ⚡ 1 Power. Even though it is free, it still counts as a Divine Power, so you cannot use another Divine Power on that same turn.

As a Divine Power, you can also spend ⚡ 7 Power to **obtain a Mythic Scroll**.

Mythic Scrolls

Mythic Scrolls can be obtained by spending ⚡ 7 as a Divine Power. Each scroll has a unique ability that can be activated once per turn for the cost of ⚡ 1 Power.




Remember that you can also win the game by obtaining and activating all 4 Mythic Scrolls!

CARD EFFECTS

Mythos

A “Mythos” effect may be triggered as soon as you have **another card of the same Mythology** in play.

The “Scarab Amulet” on the right lets you draw a card if you have another  Egypt card in play.

Note that Companions, Artifacts or even Curses that were already in play at the start of your turn can also trigger Mythos effects.

The order in which you play cards does not matter: Mythos effects can be triggered retro-actively.

Similarly, “Dual Mythos” effects need **two other cards** of the same Mythology instead of just one.



With

A “With [card name]” effect triggers conditionally if you also have that specific named card in play.

For example, Thor’s starting card “Mjöltnir” gains an additional Attack Die with his other starting card “Iron Gauntlets” in play.

Return from your Discard Pile

Some card effects let you “Return” cards from your Discard Pile to your hand. You may search through your Discard Pile for an applicable card, return it to your hand and play it as normal.



Acquired cards are placed into your Discard Pile. So you could potentially bring a newly Acquired card to your hand and play it on the same turn. Timing is key!

Banish

Card effects may allow you to “Banish” cards from your hand, from your Discard Pile or from the Market Row. Banished cards are placed in a separate pile and are considered to be out of the game.

When banishing a card **from your hand or Discard Pile**, you don’t get to use any effects of the banished card, nor does it count towards triggering Mythos effects.



Banishing weaker cards (like the Coins in your starting hand) is a key part of deck-building strategy to optimize your deck. This increases the chance you’ll draw your more powerful cards.

When banishing a card **from the Market Row**, refill the empty slot as normal. If you banish a **GUARDED** card this way, place its Monster back in the Monster Deck. You do not gain its **DEFEAT** effect and Treasure.

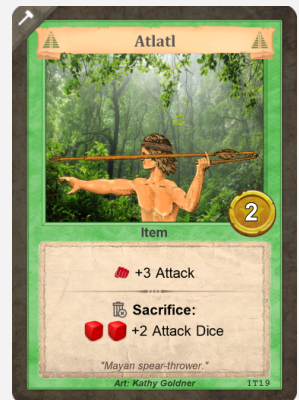


Banishing cards from the Market Row allows you to deny cards from your opponents, get rid of Monsters, or replace cards that do not synergize well with your deck.

Sacrifice

Cards with a **Sacrifice** effect, can be sacrificed for an **additional bonus effect**, on top of their normal effect. Sacrificed cards are taken out of the game, just like banished cards.

*The “Atlatl” on the right gains **+4 Attack**. If you decide to use its **Sacrifice** effect, you place the card in the Sacrificed cards pile and also gain an additional 2 Attack Dice on top of that.*



Activation

An “Activation” effect can be triggered by **spending the specified amount of ⚡ Power**. These “Activation” effects typically occur on Artifacts and Mythic Scrolls.

The “Resurrection Rune” is an Artifact that can be activated once per turn by spending 3 Power. It allows you to return a Companion from your Discard Pile to your hand.



Guard

Guards are Companions that prevent opponents from dealing damage to you and to your other non-Guard Companions. Opponents will need to destroy the Guard first. They can be recognized by their blue ♥ strength icon (instead of red).

The “Shieldmaiden” is a Guard. She protects you and your other Companions. Opponents will need to deal with her first.



Epitaph

Some Companions have an ☠ **Epitaph** effect, which triggers when the Companion is destroyed. Note that the Epitaph effect applies to the *owner* of the card.

The “Shaman Priestess” has reincarnation powers. When she is destroyed, her Epitaph effect allows you to return another Companion from your discard pile to your hand.



Scrolls Bonus

Some cards have additional bonus effects depending on the number of Mythic Scrolls you have.

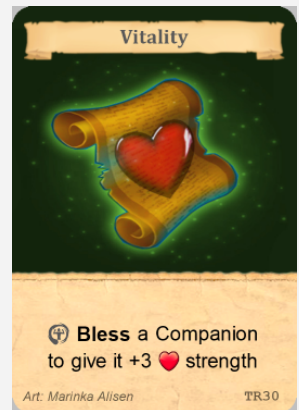
The “Strike” card in your starting hand starts off by gaining you 1 Attack Die. Additionally, for each Mythic Scroll you have, your Strike becomes stronger and you gain an extra 🎲 +1 Attack.



Bless

Some Treasures have a “Bless” effect, which is a bonus effect that can be attached to a Companion in your play area. This bless effect persists until the Companion gets destroyed.

This “Vitality” effect grants a Companion +3 strength.



THE GODS



Athena

As the **Greek Goddess of Wisdom**, Athena can perform one additional Divine Power each turn. Her Divine Powers focus on card draw and deck manipulation synergies. Athena starts off with her Spear of Truth, Aegis Shield and her trusty Owl companion. Her sacred Olive Tree is lost in the Market Deck.



Seth

As the **Egyptian God of Chaos**, Seth can manipulate the Market Row with his Divine Intervention token. His powers focus on wreaking havoc. Seth starts off with his Khopesh Sword. With his Sandstorm action he can banish a card from the Market Row. His Demonic Pact allows him to draw or banish cards in exchange for health. His Scepter is lost in the Market Deck.



Ixchel

As the **Maya Goddess of Medicine**, Ixchel has the ability to heal above her starting health of 50. Her Divine Powers also have a focus on healing. Ixchel starts the game with Poisoned Herbs, Medicinal Herbs, and her Lunar Rabbit companion. Her Dreamcatcher is lost in the Market Deck.



Thor

As the **Norse Warrior God of Thunder**, Thor gains a passive +1 attack if he has one or more companions in play. His Divine Powers also have a focus on attack and destruction. Thor starts the game with Mjölfnir (which he can return from his discard pile), Iron Gauntlets and Thunderstrike. His Powerbelt is lost in the Market Deck.

F.A.Q.

Do Curses and Artifacts trigger Mythos effects?

Yes, they do.

Can I attack a player that has Companions in front of them?

Yes, you are free to decide whether you want to attack the Companions and/or the player. Only *Guard* Companions need to be destroyed first.

Can Shields be used to prevent damage to Companions?


No. Shields can only prevent direct damage to players.

Can I perform multiple Divine Powers in a single turn?

No. Unless some card effect states otherwise, you may only perform one single Divine Power each turn.

What if I gain more than 4 dice of a certain type?

You cannot roll more dice of a certain type than are available (4). However, each excess die gains you a fixed +1 bonus for that resource.

For example: If you gain 6  Attack Dice on your turn, you'll only roll 4.

But you get to add +2  to the result total because of the 2 excess dice.

What if I gain more dice after I already rolled my Dice Pool?

You only get one roll each turn. If you happen to gain more dice after you already made your roll, these are treated just like excess dice, gaining you a fixed bonus of +1 for that resource.