How to play Empires Out of Time



Command five lanes against the computer. Bring the enemy base from **20 HP to zero** to win. Each base starts with **5 defence**.

Take your seat

Open **Play**, choose **Your deck** and the **AI deck**, then select **Start Match**. Each side draws seven cards. Choose **Keep hand**, or **Redraw all 7 once** to shuffle the whole hand back and draw seven replacements.

Your units occupy the lower row, one per lane. The enemy plays across from you. Your hand sits at the bottom of the board. The Coin or Gem on the top left of a card shows its cost.

Play a turn

1 **Deploy.** Start with 5 Coins and 5 Gems. If you go second, gain 2 extra Coins on your first turn, usually giving you 7 Coins and 5 Gems. Each later turn brings 5 Coins and 5 Gems. Keep unspent resources and draw back up to seven. Pay Coins to deploy units and Gems to play or set Gems.

2 **Attack Phase.** Finish deploying, then choose **Attack Phase**. Your first move, swap or attack also starts it. If you go first, you may attack only the enemy base on turn one. The lane must be clear. Blocking and base DEF apply as usual. The second player attacks normally.

3 **End Turn.** When your orders are complete, choose **End Turn**. During the enemy turn, watch for a chance to block a base attack or reveal a trap.

Discard during Deploy

Drag a card from your hand or a unit from your row onto **Your discard**. You can also inspect the card and choose **Discard**. Discarding from hand is free, even if you cannot afford to play the card. Discarding a deployed unit frees its lane. Its purchase cost stays spent.

Play at eoot.co.uk/play/

Find a rule or worked example

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Moving and attacking

Tap a unit, then a highlighted destination, ally or target. You can also drag the unit there. Newly deployed units can act that turn. On the opening turn, their only attack target is the enemy base.

STAT	READ THE CARD
MOV	Movement. Spend 1 point for every lane crossed in your row.
RNG	Range. At 0, attack the enemy opposite. At 1, you can also target an enemy one lane to either side.
DMG	Attack power. The sword at bottom left shows the current value. Check the card for bonuses against particular enemies.
DEF	Defence. The shield at top right reduces each hit. A negative value makes the hit larger.
HP	Health. The heart at bottom right tracks damage. At 0 HP the unit goes to discard unless saved. Healing restores HP up to its maximum.

Move before or after an attack

Each unit can attack once per turn. Attacking costs no MOV. You can pass through allies. To finish where an ally stands, swap them. Both units must have enough MOV to pay the full distance.



A Norse Raider has **2 MOV** and **0 RNG**. Spend one point to line up the attack and one point to leave afterwards.

Count damage on every hit

Subtract the target's DEF from unit or Gem damage, down to a minimum of zero. A 7 DMG hit against 2 DEF deals 5 damage. A unit on 10 HP falls to 5 HP and keeps its defence for the next hit.

Practise movement and combat

RULES / DEFENCE

Defending your base

An enemy can strike your base through the open lane directly opposite its unit. A friendly unit already standing in that lane protects the base. Extra RNG extends the attacker's reach against other units.

Read the incoming attack

Gold swords trace the attack. Blue shields mark defenders that can reach the threatened lane. Tap a marked ally, or drag it onto the attacker or into the lane. Choose the damage button to let the base take the hit.



THE FIVE LANES THOR CAN INTERCEPT

Shogun attacks through lane 4 with **7 DMG**. Your base has **13 HP** and **5 DEF**. Thor has **12 HP** and **2 DEF** and is one lane away.

YOUR RESPONSE	BASE AFTER HIT	THOR AFTER HIT
Take 2 damage	11 HP (13 – 2)	12 HP, still in lane 5.
Block with Thor	13 HP	7 HP in lane 4. Thor spends 1 MOV and takes 5 damage (7 – 2).

Blocking a second attack

Each defender gets a fresh movement allowance for the enemy turn and can pass through allies. A surviving blocker stays in the attacked lane and can block another base attack if its remaining MOV reaches the new lane.

Practise blocking

Gems and traps

Pay Gems when you play a card or set it face-down. You can keep **any number** of Gems set or active.

Play now or set for later

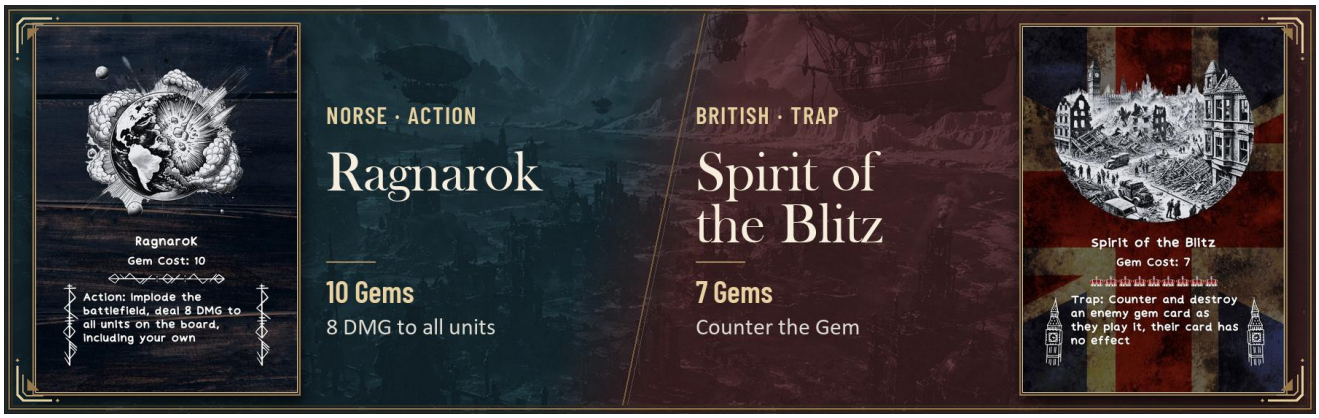
During **Deploy**, drag a Gem to **Play Gem**. Play it now or choose **Set face-down** to prepare it. Traps always enter face-down. Your opponent sees the number of set cards.

Open your **Set** pile to reveal a paid non-trap on a **later turn of your own**, during Deploy or the Attack Phase. You pay once. During the enemy turn, only traps can trigger.

Respond to a trigger

Set a trap before the event on its card. When it pulses, check what is happening. For an attack, look at the attacker, target and projected hit. Reveal the trap or choose **Pass** to leave it set. You can reveal another trap during the same attack if its trigger still applies.

Parry swaps the attacked unit's DMG and DEF for one hit. A unit with 6 DMG and 1 DEF uses 6 DEF for that attack, then returns to its usual stats.



A Gem can counter a Gem. The enemy pays 10 Gems for Ragnarok, which would deal 8 damage to each unit before defence. Reveal Spirit of the Blitz, set earlier for 7 Gems. Both cards go to discard, both costs stay spent and every unit keeps its HP.

Count one round

A round lasts from activation through the enemy's reply. Discounts, taxes, discard rewards and stat upgrades expire at the start of your next turn. Upgrades also affect eligible units deployed after activation. Coins already gained and HP already healed stay with you.

Discard a Gem

Used Gems and expired upgrades go to their owner's pile. During Deploy you can also discard a set Gem or active upgrade. Its Gem cost stays spent. Unit-discard rewards apply only to units.

Practise traps · Practise upgrades

Decks and draws

Each empire has a ready-to-play starter of **16 units and 16 Gems**. Pick one for yourself and one for the computer, or take a custom deck into battle.



Build a custom deck

RULE	LIMIT	HOW TO COUNT IT
Deck size	Exactly 32	Choose your own mix of units and Gems.
Copies	Up to 2 per card	Cards from different empires can share a deck.
Coin budget	Up to 75 Coins	Add the printed Coin costs of your units.
Gem budget	Up to 75 Gems	Add the printed Gem costs of your Gem cards.

The budgets are separate. A deck costing 74 Coins and 76 Gems is one Gem over its limit.

What counts as a discard

You cause a discard when you destroy an enemy unit, force a card from the enemy hand into discard, or discard your own deployed unit or a card from your hand. The card goes to its owner's pile. If a reward calls for discarding a **unit**, the discarded card must be a unit.

For example, Artillery discards a card from the enemy hand. If Artillery hits a unit, you caused a unit discard. If it hits a Gem, you caused a Gem discard.

When the match is a draw

If neither side can damage a base, the match is a draw. The game takes remaining units, boosts and recovery into account. In a stalemate, a base on 1 HP draws against a base on 20 HP.

An empty deck causes no fatigue damage. Once both decks are empty and both sides can afford their remaining cards, an unchanged position for one full round is a draw. If units manoeuvre, the third occurrence of the same formation with the same actions available also ends the match. A change to HP, cards or lasting effects restarts the count.

Try the positions

The next four pages cover an opening turn, a ranged attack, a trap response and the timing of named Gems. You can also practise decisions in the game.

Block a base attack · Redirect a hit · Start a match

WORKED EXAMPLE / 01

Open with Thor's Anger

You go first as the Norse with **5 Coins** and **5 Gems**. Your opening hand includes Raider, Thor's Anger and Housecarl. Can both units gain the upgrade if you play it between them?



Play the three cards

1 **Deploy Raider in lane 2.** Pay 2 Coins. Raider enters with 5 DMG, 0 DEF and 10 HP. You have 3 Coins and 5 Gems left.

2 **Play Thor's Anger.** Pay 3 Gems. Raider gains 4 DMG and loses 1 DEF. Its new stats are 9 DMG and −1 DEF.

3 **Deploy Housecarl in lane 3.** Spend your last 3 Coins. Housecarl enters with the same upgrade, bringing it from 6 DMG and 1 DEF to 10 DMG and 0 DEF. You finish with 2 Gems.

Follow the Raider through the round

MOMENT	DMG	DEF	HP
After deployment	5	0	10
While Thor's Anger is active	9	−1	10
After a 6 DMG hit from Ronin	9	−1	3
Start of your next turn	5	0	3

Raider can attack the base on turn one through a clear lane. If unblocked, Raider deals 4 damage (9 DMG minus 5 DEF). If Ronin hits Raider next turn, its −1 DEF turns 6 DMG into 7 damage. Raider keeps those wounds when the upgrade expires.

Try an upgrade

WORKED EXAMPLE / 02

Choose the Longbowman's target

Your Longbowman stands alone in lane 3. Opposite him is a full-health Housecarl. A Thrall is one lane to its left. Lane 4 is empty on both sides. Where can a single arrow land?



Shoot from lane 3

You have 1 RNG and 7 DMG. Either enemy unit is in range. There is no second friendly Ranger to grant the Longbowman's Volley bonus.

TARGET	HIT	RESULT
Thrall in lane 2	7 − 0 DEF	Thrall falls from 8 HP to 1 HP.
Housecarl in lane 3	7 − 1 DEF	Housecarl falls from 10 HP to 4 HP.

Or move first and threaten the base

1 **Move into lane 4.** Spend the Longbowman's 1 MOV. In lane 3, Housecarl stood between you and the base. From lane 4, you have a clear shot.

2 **Watch the defender's choice.** If the enemy takes the hit, the base's 5 DEF reduces 7 DMG to 2 damage. A base on 20 HP falls to 18.

3 **Resolve a block if one is chosen.** Housecarl can spend 1 MOV to intercept from lane 3. It stays in lane 4 on 4 HP and the base stays on 20. Thrall has 1 MOV and is two lanes away, so it cannot make this block.

Shooting a unit and shooting the base are alternative orders. The Longbowman gets one attack this turn.

Try a ranged attack · Try blocking

WORKED EXAMPLE / 03

Turn the Imperial Guard's attack back

Last turn you paid **5 Gems** to set Loki's Mirror. Now an enemy Imperial Guard attacks your Norse Raider. Both units have 10 HP. The Mirror lights up on your side. What happens if you reveal it?



Read the attack before you choose

The Guard has 7 DMG and gains 1 against Barbarians. Raider is a Barbarian with 0 DEF, so the incoming hit is 8 damage. The Guard itself is a Ranger with 1 DEF.

YOUR RESPONSE	RAIDER	IMPERIAL GUARD	LOKI'S MIRROR
Pass	2 HP	10 HP	Stays set
Reveal Mirror	10 HP	4 HP	Goes to discard

Resolve the reflection

1 **Reveal the set trap.** The hit changes target from Raider to the attacking Imperial Guard. The 5 Gems you paid last turn covered the cost.

2 **Check the new target's tags.** The Guard is a Ranger. Its bonus against Barbarians no longer applies, so its attack deals its printed 7 DMG before defence.

3 **Apply the new target's defence.** The Guard's 1 DEF reduces the hit to 6. The Guard falls from 10 HP to 4 HP, Raider stays on 10 HP, and the used Mirror goes to discard.

Practise trap responses · Play a match

WORKED EXAMPLE / 04

Time your Gems

You play **Law Speakers**. A unit that usually costs your opponent 3 Coins now costs 4. That price applies throughout their reply. When your next turn starts, the tax ends.

Choose when to earn Coins

Play **The Senate** before discarding a unit or destroying an enemy unit. Each one earns 2 Coins while the card's effect lasts. After your opponent's reply, you keep those Coins and future discards earn the usual amount.

Read the duration before committing

GEM	WHEN TO USE IT	WHAT HAPPENS
Diplomat	Choose two enemy units.	Both lose movement and attacks through the enemy's reply. They also cannot move to block. The lock ends when your next turn starts.
The Rock	Choose two allies. Suppose their current DEF values are 1 and 3.	Both reach 4 DEF. Each adds the other's original value. At the start of your next turn, each loses only the DEF gained from The Rock.
Odin Sleep	Choose an ally to protect for a round.	It gains 10 DEF and can move and block. It cannot attack until your next turn, when sleep and the DEF bonus both end.
Repel the Horde	Spring this trap when an enemy with more units in play tries to deploy.	The attempted deployment and every later unit deployment that turn are stopped. Units already on the board stay there.
Buddhi	Spring this trap against an enemy attack.	Avoid that attack. You may avoid up to two more attacks during the same enemy turn. Unused saves expire.

When a Gem stops an action

Try the action on the battlefield. The game highlights the Gem responsible, so you can inspect its card and choose your next move.