



Pascal Ribault



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30 min / joueur



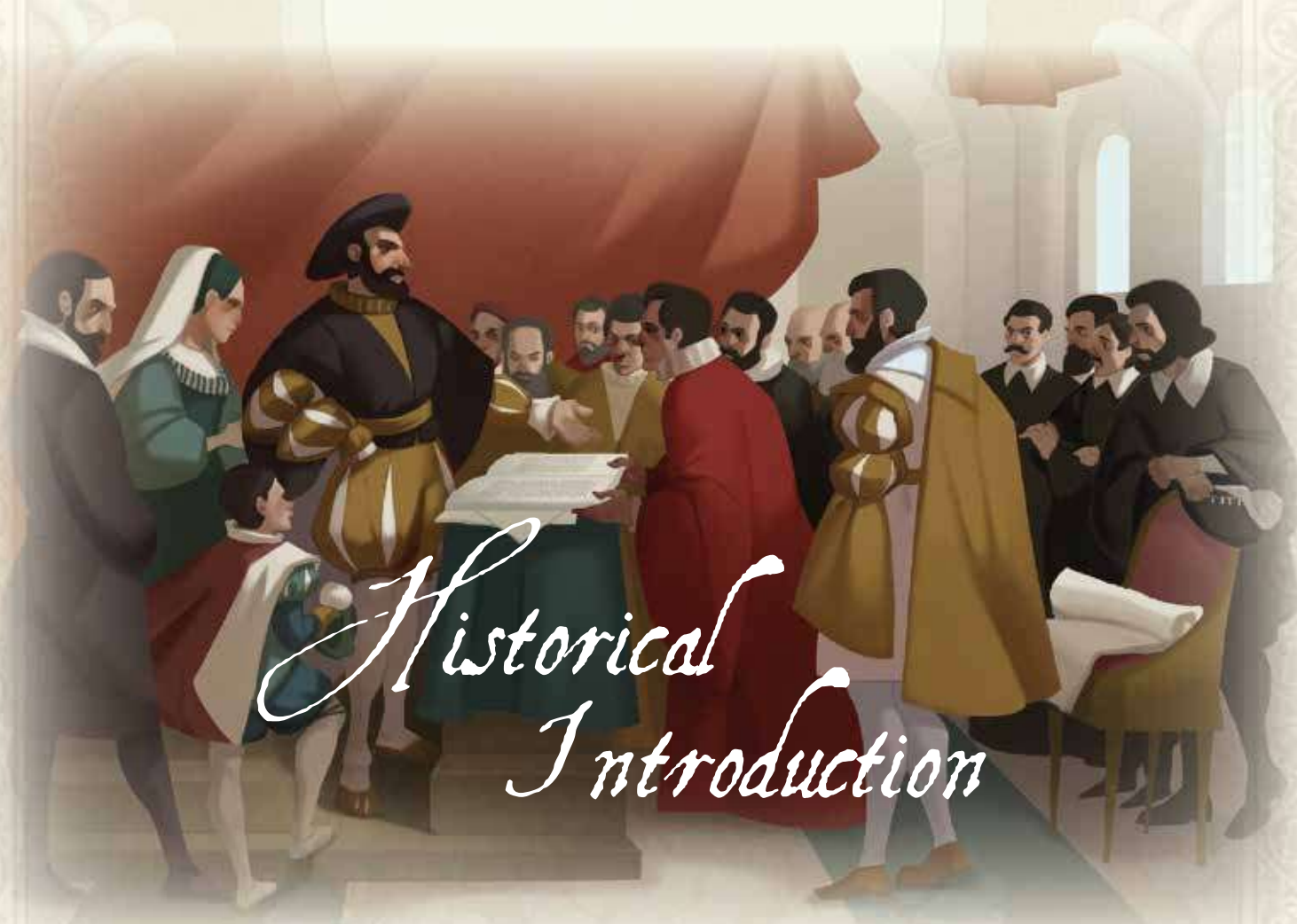
Virtù

~ The Art of Governing ~



For 3 to 5 players





Historical Introduction

Toward the end of the 15th Century, due to feudalism and the weakening of imperial power, **Italy** is divided into several political entities. Around the Pontifical States of Rome, four great Cities share the vast majority of power and wealth: the Republics of **Florence** and **Venice**, the Duchy of **Milan**, and the kingdom of **Naples**. Their rivalry to obtain political and commercial supremacy is constant, and they seize every opportunity to augment their artistic prestige and their religious influence.

It is within this troubled political setting that the modern bases of diplomacy and war take shape, and that a major cultural process flourishes through financing of scholars and artists. The rediscovery of the Greco-Roman authors leads to an evolution of mindsets and perceptions.

Virtù is an Italian word meaning "Virtue", "Quality", or "Capability", depending on the context. It is also the name of a concept theorized by **Niccolò Machiavelli**, which designates the aptitude of a leader to accomplish great things, by securing the bases necessary for State power, and by finding ways to adapt to eventualities; or in other words, "**The Art of Governing**".



The coronation of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, by Pope Clement VII in the cathedral of Bologna, February 23, 1530.




Italian merchants coming to trade in silk cloth in Lyon in 1536.

There are two forms of combat: one with law, the other with force. The first is proper for men, the other is common among beasts. But because very often the first does not suffice, it is necessary to resort to the second.

*Niccolò Machiavelli:
The Prince (1532)*



Contents

The components specific to 2-player games (bearing the  icon) are used only in Virtù, the Wars of Italy.



- 1 large central board depicting Italy, with a side for 2/5 players and a side for 3/4 players



- 5 "Palace" Action boards (1 x 5 colors) including 2 double sided (blue and yellow)



- 15 Family cards 3 – 5 players (3 x 5 colors)



- 1 small Prestige board 2 players



- 57 tiles, including: 31 Cities (Rome appears twice), 14 Titles, 5 Guilds, 5 Cathedrals, and 2 tiles for 2-player games



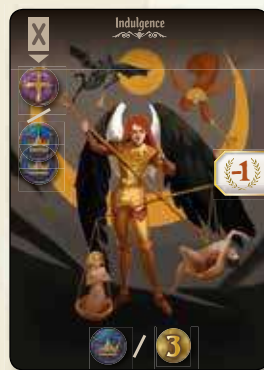
- 13 Family cards 2 players (4 blue, 3 yellow, 2 red, 2 green, and 2 white)



- 1 small board with a Prestige side for 3 – 5 players, and an Influence side for 2 players



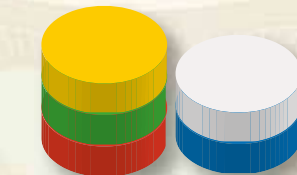
- 56 Notable cards (5 copies of each, except the Pope)



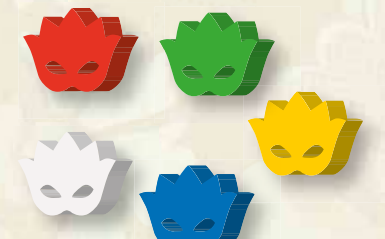
- 10 Indulgence cards



- 10 Patronage Bonuses (9 cards + 1 tile)



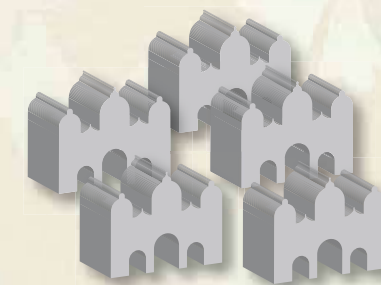
- 90 Control discs (18 x 5 colors)



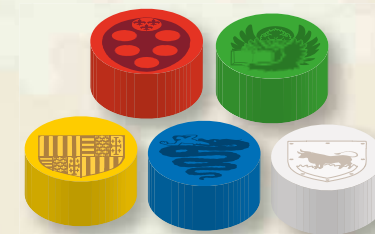
- 11 +1 War Bonus tokens

- 32 Troop meeples (8 blue; 6 of each of the other 4 colors)

- 25 Agent meeples (5 x 5 colors)



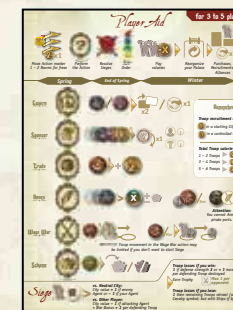
- 5 Cathedral pawns



- 5 Action markers, printed with coats of arms (1 x 5 colors)



- 45 Florin coins (30 x 1 florin; 15 x 5 florins)



- 5 double-sided Player Aids (one side for 3 – 5 players; the other, for 2 players)



- 1 scorepad



- 2 rulebooks: Virtù: The Art of Governing and Virtù: The Wars of Italy

Setup

- 1 Place the **Italy board (1a)** in the middle of the table, with the side matching the player count facing up. Stack the similar **Notable cards (1b)** in a face-up display, all available for purchase.
- 2 Stack the **Neutral City tiles (those without coats of arms) (2a)** and splay the **Patronage Bonuses (9 cards and 1 tile) (2b)**, as well as the **Title tiles (2c)** and **Cathedral tiles (2d)** (with their 5 pawns).
- 3 Stack the 10 **Indulgence cards**.
- 4 Pile the 11 **+1 War Bonus** tokens in a general supply.
- 5 Finally, pile the **florins** in a general supply, as well.
- 6 • **2 tiles** depicting your two **Starting Cities**, with your coat of arms; place them face up (full-color, Resources Available side) in your Domain (i.e. above your Palace).
- 7 • **18 Control discs**. Place 1 on each of your 2 **Starting Cities** on the Italy board (10a), 1 on a random **Turn Order** space (10b), and 2 on the Prestige board: 1 on the Patronage starting space; 1 on the Cities starting space (10c). Once you determine the 1st player (see next page), the order of discs in these two stacks must match the turn order: top on top; bottom on bottom. Keep your other discs near your Palace (10d).
- 8 • **6 Troop meeples**. Place 1 beside each of your

2 Starting Cities on the Italy board (11a). Keep the others near your Palace, available for recruitment later (11b). (Blue only gets 6; the other 2 blue troops are for the 2-player game, *The Wars of Italy*.)

- 12 • **5 Agent meeples**. You start the game with 2 (12a) (except for Naples; your Family cards let you start with 3). The others are unavailable for now; put them in a common supply (12b).

Each player also gets the following:

- 13 • 1 Florin, 1
- 14 • 1 Player Aid (use the side for 3 – 5 players).

2-Player Game

Read these general rules for 3 – 5 players, then read the special 2-player rules, *The Wars of Italy*.

3-Player Game

Use the **3/4 players** side of the Italy board, and the **3 – 5 players** side of the Prestige board and player aids.

You can play as **Florence** (red), **Naples** (yellow), or **Venice** (green).

8 cities are unavailable: Nice, Turin, Milan, Genoa, Parma, Ragusa, Cagliari, and Reggio (there is a small star by their names on the central board). Cover these cities with the 8 **Forbidden Cities** tokens, and return the 8 corresponding City tiles to the box.

Also return the City tiles for **Perugia** and **Civitavecchia** to the box, because they are not on the 3/4-player side of the board.

Use the **Rome** City tile without a coat of arms; splay it with the Neutral City tiles.

4-Player Game

Use the **3/4 players** side of the Italy board, and the **3 – 5 players** side of the Prestige board and player aids.

You can play as **Milan** (blue), **Florence** (red), Naples (yellow), or **Venice** (green).

Return the City tiles for **Perugia** and **Civitavecchia** to the box, because they are not on the 3/4-player side of the board.

Use the **Rome** City tile without a coat of arms; splay it with the Neutral City tiles.

5-Player Game

Use the **2/5 players** side of the Italy board, and the **3 – 5 players** side of the Prestige board and player aids.

The fifth player plays **Rome** (white), and starts with 3 agents (instead of 2).

Use the **Rome** City tile with a coat of arms, which starts in possession of the Roman player.

Note:
A 5-player game is not a great way to learn *Virtù*.

Determining the 1st Player

Whoever most recently visited Italy becomes the 1st player, and turn order goes clockwise. Arrange the discs on the **Turn Order track** accordingly. This order will change during the game.

At the beginning of the game, the discs on the Prestige board (Patronage and Cities; see 10b and 10c), must also be **stacked** in the same order, with the 1st player on top and the last player on bottom.

Each player, choose a color and get the following in that color:

- 6 • **1 Action board**, called your “Palace”, which you place in front of you (for the blue and yellow Palaces, be sure to use the side for 3 – 5 players).
- 7 • **3 Family cards for 3 – 5 players** (with your coat of arms), which you will place either in various Rooms of your Palace, or on the Cortigiano spaces (see pp. 9 – 10).
- 8 • **1 Action marker** (with your coat of arms), which you will later place on one of the 5 Rooms of your Palace, indicating your choice for your 1st action (see p. 11).



Setup example for a 4-player game.



Goal of the Game

Each player represents one of the great dynasties that made its mark on the Italian Renaissance: the **Aragons** of Naples, the **Sforzas** of Milan, the **Medicis** of Florence, the **Doges** of Venice, or the **Borgias** of Rome. Your goal is to establish your power and supremacy, and become “Master of Italy”.

1 You will earn Prestige Points through your choices and actions, such as Governance to collect resources, Patronage of scholars and artists, Commerce, as well as seizing control of other Cities (via diplomacy by Annexing them, or by force through War), all while becoming an expert at political Intrigues and Alliances with great foreign powers.

These **Prestige Points** will represent the fruits of your “Virtù”, your “Art of Governing”, which will depend on your final standing in different measures:

- The number of Cities you control.
- Your advancement in Patronage of the arts and sciences.
- Your level of religious influence.
- Your Military Trophies.
- Your political alliances with the great foreign powers.
- Prestige Points from certain cards or tiles.

Principal Elements of the Game

Your Palace:

Your Action board is different from everyone else’s, and is called your **Palace**. In the middle of each Palace are 5 **Rooms**, or **Action spaces**.

You will choose which action you want to take by moving your **Action marker** clockwise from one Room to another.

Your Palace also has 6 Antechambers, or **Cortigiano spaces**, of which only 3 are available at the beginning of the game (2 on the right and 1 on the left). The 3 shaded spaces are unavailable for now.



A Palace

Cards and Tiles:

Tiles primarily represent Cities and Titles.

Cards represent Notable individuals; some of them provide an Action (in the upper-right corner).

Most of the cards and non-City tiles have a purchase cost (in the upper-left corner).

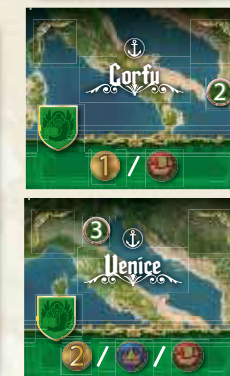
All cards and tiles have symbols at the bottom which will be used during Actions or purchases. On the full-color side, these are “available resources”; on the amber side, these are “exhausted resources”.



Resources Available



Resources Exhausted



The 3 Family cards and 2 Starting City tiles for the Venetian player.

You start with 3 **Family** cards and 2 **Starting City** tiles, all of which bear your coat of arms.

The tiles you obtain during the game always go in your Domain, Resources Available side up, except during a Siege or during construction of a Cathedral (this will be explained later).

Your cards will always be in your Palace, in one of 3 types of spaces (you never keep cards in your hand); and we refer to the card according to its space type:

- So-called **Cortigiano** (Courtier) cards:

After setup, when you obtain a new Notable card during the game, it must go to an empty Cortigiano space.

Depending on the phase of the game, these cards will show their **Resources Available** side or **Resources Exhausted** side.

- So-called **Action** cards will go in a Room of your Palace. The card must have an Action on it, and its Action thereby replaces the action of the Room it occupies.

- So-called **Improvement** cards will go beneath a card in an **Action** space, with their bottom symbols visible.

Attention: Each Action space can only contain a single Improvement card.

Cards in **Action** and **Improvement** spaces always show their Resources Available side.

During setup, place your 3 Family cards in your Palace however you like, respecting the above restrictions (thus, you can place each directly in an Action or Improvement space, or even in a Cortigiano space).

Actions and Resources:

A - THERE ARE 6 ACTIONS:



B - THERE ARE 8 TYPES OF RESOURCE SYMBOLS AT THE BOTTOMS OF TILES AND CARDS:

- Florin**
Usable at any moment.
- Crown**
Usable during the Govern, Sponsor, and Annex actions, as well as during purchases or to rid yourself of an Indulgence.
- Cross**
Usable during the Govern and Sponsor actions, as well as during purchases or to rid yourself of an Indulgence.
- Cavalry**
Usable during the Wage War action.
- Ship**
Usable during the Annex, Wage War, and Trade actions.
- Mask**
Usable during the Scheme action.
- War**
Usable when resolving Sieges, providing 1 additional point of strength.
- Arrow**
Usable during Phase 1 of the turn, allowing you to advance your Action marker one additional space for free.

Using Resources to Pay a Cost

During the game, you will have to pay costs during your **Actions** or **Purchases**. These costs are expressed in florins and/or Resource symbols.

You pay **florins** from your treasury.

You can also use **Florin symbols on Cortigiano cards or tiles in your Domain** at any time (even outside an Action, or on another player's turn — provided their Resources Available side is showing) to collect florins directly to your treasury. Simply flip each card/tile you use to its Resources Exhausted side to do this.

On the other hand, you can only use the **Florin symbols on Action cards and Improvement cards** when you are using their Room's action (see Actions); if they provide more florins than you need, you cannot add the surplus to your treasury.

You cannot store **non-florin Resource symbols**; you must use them immediately (or they go to waste).

If you wish to use Resource symbols on the bottom of a Cortigiano card or a tile in your Domain, it must be showing its Resources Available side; and you flip it to its Resources Exhausted side to use the depicted resources



The symbols on an **Action** card or an **Improvement** card can only be used to pay the cost of the Action of the Room where the card is (see **Actions**). On the other hand, these cards never flip over; they always show their Resources Available side.

Attention: During any given game phase, only 1 type of symbol per card/tile bottom can be used to "pay a cost".

An **Action** card atop an **Improvement** card provides **2 different** card bottoms (the Action card and the Improvement card); **you can use the same type of symbol on both, or one type from the Action card and a different type from the Improvement card.**



Rules of the Game

The game is divided into "Years", each comprising a Spring phase and a Winter phase; each phase uses the Turn Order, which changes between the two phases.

• PHASE 1: SPRING

Beginning of Spring: Move your Action marker and perform the Action.

End of Spring: Resolve Sieges, then redefine the Turn Order.

• PHASE 2: WINTER

Pay Troops' salaries, reorganize your Palace, recruit, purchase, form alliances.

If, at the end of a Year, a player has reached the end of either the Patronage or Cities track on the Prestige board, or players control every city on the Italy map, the game comes to an end.



Phase 1: Spring

A - BEGINNING OF SPRINGS

Move your Action marker and perform the Action

In only the very 1st Spring, in turn order, you will place your **Action marker** directly on the Room whose Action you wish to perform, and immediately perform the action.



Each Spring thereafter, you must move your Action marker clockwise 1 - 2 spaces for free.

If you wish to move more than 2 Rooms, you can:

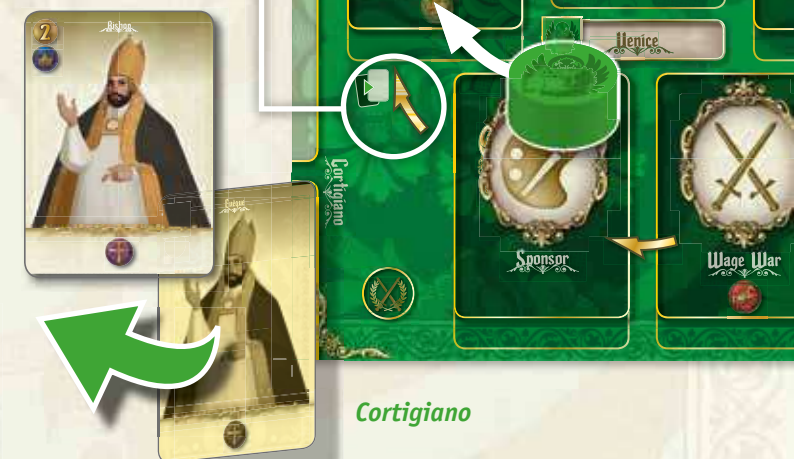
- Pay 2 florins (only one time per Spring) to move one additional Room.
- Pay 1 Arrow symbol per additional Room to move additional Rooms. You flip the tiles, whose Arrow symbols you spend, to their Resources Exhausted side.

You can even do both: You can pay 2 florins and some number of Arrow symbols. By spending enough arrows, you could even do a "complete circuit" of your Palace to perform the same Action that you did in the prior Spring.

If the Action marker moves past a Cortigiano Arrow symbol (on the left or right edge of your Palace), flip all Cortigiano cards on that edge of your Palace back to their Resources Available side.

Thus, as you pass by your courtiers, "visiting" them, they put their resources at your disposal.

In this example, Green's Action marker passes the Cortigiano arrow on the left: All of Green's Cortigiano cards on the left side of the Palace flip back to their Resources Available side.



Next, perform the Action of the Room in which your Action marker ends its move.

If there is an Action card in this Room, perform the card's Action instead of the one printed in the space. The Action card supersedes the Action space as long as the card is there.

Actions have variable costs, and their magnitude will depend on the symbols you can and are willing to pay when performing them.

Paying the Action Cost

When you perform an Action, you must pay the cost, using the Resources of the specified type(s). You can only use **one type of symbol from each card/tile bottom**; however, you can use multiple cards and/or tiles.

1) FIRST USE THE RESOURCES PROVIDED:

- From the Action card under the Action marker.
- From the Improvement card that might be in this same Room.

These cards remain on their Resources Available side after the Action.

2) THEN SUPPLEMENT THEM IF NECESSARY:

- From one or more Resources-Available Cortigiano cards (from the left and/or right sides of your Palace), which you immediately flip to their Resources Exhausted side.
- From Resources-Available tiles in your Domain, which you immediately flip to their Resources Exhausted side.
- From an **Alliance Bonus** available to you. After an Alliance has ended, its Bonus becomes unavailable (see **Alliances**).

Blue uses a Crown from the bottom of the Cardinal Action card, a Cross from the bottom of the **Improvement** card beneath it, and a Crown from the **Ambassador** Cortigiano card; Blue flips the Ambassador to its amber side.

Thus Blue has 2 Crowns and 1 Cross for the Govern action.

Blue could also use any Crowns and Crosses on Resources-Available tiles in Blue's Domain, flipping them to their amber side.

Ridding Yourself of an Indulgence

To rid yourself of an Indulgence card and remove it from your Palace, you must pay either 1 Cross or 2 Crowns at the moment your Action marker **passes over** or **ends up** on the Room with the Indulgence card; and you must pay it before taking your Action.

Cost of your choice to rid yourself of the card



You are allowed to use Cortigiano cards (even ones made freshly available by the Action marker's move) to pay the cost to rid yourself of an Indulgence. In any case, once you pay the cost, remove the Indulgence card from the room and return it to the stack of Indulgences.

If this Indulgence card was in the Room where the Action marker ended up, you can now take the Action as usual.

Note that each Indulgence card still in your Palace will lose you 1 Prestige Point at the end of the game.

Historical Clarification: In the 15th and 16th Centuries, the Catholic Church traded in Indulgences, allowing the rich and powerful to redeem their sins. Starting in 1517, this practice will be profoundly denounced by Luther in his 95 theses, and will be one of the causes of the Protestant Reform.

The 6 Actions Available



Govern

Effects: Flip all tiles in your Domain to their Resources Available side and reactivate the Alliance Bonus.

Action Cost: Crowns or Crosses.

Procedure: Flip up to 2 tiles to their Resources Available side per Crown or Cross you pay.

You can spend both Crowns and Crosses in the same Action (but from distinct cards/tiles, because you can only use one type of symbol from each card/tile).

You can also spend a **Crown** or a **Cross** to **reactivate the Alliance Bonus** for an alliance you have with a Major Power.

See **Phase 2: Winter, E - Alliances**.

Attention: You cannot use this Action to flip tiles that you are using to pay for this Action.

Note: You are always allowed to collect florins from Resources-Available tiles just before resolving a Govern action. Because you don't pay florins to Govern, and you can use Florin symbols at any time, you can use the tile, then Govern to make it available again.



Sponsor

Effect: Progress on the Patronage track (as a patron of scholars and artists).

Action Cost: Florins, and Crowns or Crosses.

Procedure: Pay the cost indicated on the Prestige board for the next step you want to take on the Patronage track.

You can only progress one step per Year.



It costs 2 florins and either 1 Crown or 1 Cross to progress to each of the first two steps; then 3 florins, 1 Crown, and either another Crown or a Cross to reach each of the next two; and finally, 4 florins, 2 Crowns, and 1 Cross to reach the final step (as indicated on the Patronage track).

• PATRONAGE BONUS

When you reach the 2nd and 4th steps on the Patronage tracks, you immediately take a Patronage Bonus of your choice from those remaining.

Patronage Bonuses (9 cards and 1 tile) are identifiable by the symbol, and there are two types:



Artist or



Work

Some of the default Actions printed on the Palace Rooms (Govern, Scheme, and Wage War) offer a symbol at the bottom already (respectively, Crown, Mask, Cavalry), which may allow you to perform these actions without additional cards or tiles.

Once you cover the space with a card, those symbols are covered and unavailable.

After taking the benefit, place an Indulgence card on the Room of your Action. If Family or Notable cards are already in this Room, stack the Indulgence card atop them (but beneath the Action marker).

If the Room is already covered with an Indulgence card, you cannot request another here.

In fact, if the Room where your Action marker stops already has an **Indulgence** card (and you do not immediately rid yourself of it), you cannot take the Room's Action, and cannot request **another Indulgence** this Season.

In this example, the Room is covered by an Indulgence card. Red must rid themselves of it first if they wish to perform this Room's Action.



Requesting an Indulgence

Once per phase, during the Spring phase (and the Winter phase, as well), you can request an "Indulgence", which works like a loan.

It permits you to take one of the following benefits:

- **1 Crown**, which you must use immediately to pay for the cost of your Action.
- **3 florins**, which immediately go into your treasury.

The type you select at step 4 must be different from the type you selected at step 2. Thus, you can have no more than 1 **artist** and 1 **work** during the game.



There are eight Patronage Bonuses that grant permanent effects, which you place near you, but “away from your Palace” and outside your Domain:

- **Leonardo da Vinci** provides a War Bonus (if you pay 1 florin) during each Siege.
- **The Bastion Fort** provides a War Bonus of **+2 defense** each time you are besieged.
- **Nicolaus Copernicus** provides an additional Cortigiano space.
- **The Prince** provides a Cortigiano space and an additional Agent. It also prevents other players from placing their Agents on your Cities, Rooms, and Alliances.
- **Michelangelo** provides a “free” Crown for your Sponsor actions.
- **The Duomo and the Sistine Chapel** provide, respectively, 1 or 2 additional Crosses but **only in determining your level of religious influence in the final scoring** (see End of the Game).

Some Patronage Bonuses also provide 1 Prestige Point at the end of the game; **Christopher Columbus** provides 2.

There are two Patronage Bonuses that provide resources, which you place differently when you obtain them:

- Place **Niccolò Machiavelli** (considered a Notable card) with the Resources Available side up on a Cortigiano space.
- Place the **Cannons** (which is a tile) with the Resources Available side up in your Domain.



Trade

Effect: Collect 2 florins per Ship you use.

Action Cost: Ships.

Procedure: Collect 2 florins (from the supply) per Ship symbol you “pay” from your available resources.



Annex

Effect: Seize control of a neutral City (without a coat of arms) through diplomacy.

Action Cost: Crowns, and in some cases Ships.



Red annexes Ravenna (value 2) from Florence, and must pay 3 Crowns.

Procedure: You must pay a number of Crowns **greater than** the “modified” value of the City you are annexing.

The City’s base value is indicated on the Italy board. Reduce the value by 1 if you have an Agent there. Increase the value by 1 if an opponent has an Agent there.

Place one of your Control discs on the City, then take its tile and place it in your Domain, with the Resources Available side up. In addition, advance 1 space on the Cities track of the Prestige board.

Restrictions: The target City must be adjacent by road to a City you already control.

Instead of annexing a City adjacent by road, you can annex a port City from one of your port Cities. In addition to the Crown cost, you must pay 1 Ship per sea traversed.



Red annexes Terracina (port, value 1), which has 1 green Agent on it (value +1), from Pisa (port), and must pay 3 Crowns and 2 Ships (having traversed 2 seas).

The Anchor symbols on the Italy board indicate which sea borders each port. Note that some Cities have ports on two seas.

You cannot annex “Pirate” Ports (Ragusa, Ajaccio, Cagliari, Tunis), indicated on the Italy board by a symbol.



Indicates that the City is a pirate port.

Indicates that the City cannot be annexed.

Wage War



Effect: Move your Troops and initiate one or more Sieges to try to seize control of one or more Cities forcibly; you can besiege Neutral Cities and/or Cities already controlled by opponents.

Action Cost: Cavalry, Ships, War Bonuses.

Procedure: Pay Cavalry and/or Ship symbols to move your Troop meeples.



1 Cavalry symbol lets you move **1 Troop** to a City adjacent by road.



1 Ship symbol lets you move **1 Troop** across **1 sea**.

You can move the same Troop multiple times by spending multiple Symbols (for example: 1 Cavalry to move 1 Troop from a City to a neighboring Port City, then 2 Ships to move it across 2 seas).

You are welcome to move any number of Troops this way (together or independently) by paying the necessary symbols for each.

Any Troops that move to a neutral City or a City controlled by an opponent must end their movement there immediately (leave the Troops “in front” of the City) to besiege the City. The Siege will be resolved during the End of Spring.

(See Resolving Sieges.)



Several Sieges can be initiated during the same Spring.

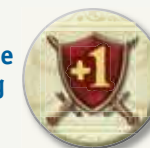
Attention: If you wish to use a War symbol at the bottom of your Wage War Action card or Improvement card for the upcoming Siege, remember that you cannot also use Cavalry or Ship symbols on it (because you can only use one type of symbol per card/tile).

To help you remember when you use the War symbol instead, take 1 +1 War Bonus token for each War symbol you used, then use the tokens during the Siege resolution during the End of Spring.

You must pay any florin cost immediately when you take the token.

You cannot get multiple tokens from the same War symbol — not even by paying multiple times.

+1 War Bonus tokens that you don’t use during the End of Spring go to waste.



Scheme



Effect: Place, move, or eliminate Agents.

Action Cost: Masks.

Procedure: For each Mask symbol you pay, do one of the following:

- Place one of your Agents in, or move one of your Agents to, a City that does not contain one.
- Place one of your Agents in, or move one of your Agents to, a Palace Room that does not contain one.
- Place one of your Agents in, or move one of your Agents to, an Alliance that does not contain one.
- Remove an opponent’s Agent from anywhere in play.

Agents

At the beginning of the game, you have 2 or 3 Agents available. Agents are essentially spies who will work to promote your enterprises and to sabotage other players’ progress.

You receive a **new available Agent** (up to a maximum of 5) when you purchase a Consigliere, Podesta, or Assassin card, or take **The Prince** Patronage Bonus.



During a Scheme action, Agents move to **Cities**, to the **Palace**, or to **Alliances**.

Each City, each Alliance, and each Palace Room can only host one Agent at a time.

Optional rule for your first few games: Each Palace can only host one enemy Agent at a time.

If you want to send your Agent somewhere already occupied by an enemy Agent, you must remove the enemy Agent before you can place yours there. You can do this as part of the same action; it simply requires paying 2 Mask symbols.

You can thus defensively place your own Agents in your Palace Rooms, Alliances, or Cities under your control, so your opponents cannot place their own Agents there until they remove yours.

If you have run out of available Agents, or feel one of your Agents would be more useful elsewhere, you can use this action to relocate one of your Agents, instead.

When an opponent removes one of your Agents, it returns to you, available to be deployed again in your next Scheme action.

Conquering another player’s City or appropriating an Alliance does not make the Agent there disappear, no matter whose Agent it is.

How an Agent Affects a Palace Room

If an enemy Agent occupies a Room of your Palace, you cannot take the Action from that Room (same as when an Indulgence card is there).

However, if that Room has the **Scheme** action, you can still take this action as long as you use its first Mask symbol (and one other) to remove the enemy Agent from it.

An enemy Agent also prevents you from rearranging the cards in that Room during the Winter phase.

Green cannot take the Action in the Room occupied by a red Agent. Green also will not be able to modify the contents of this Room during Winter.



The green Agent, on the Wage War action, forces an opponent to pay 2 Masks before they can place their own there.

How an Agent Affects a City

Cities have a base value, which is printed on the Italy board.

An Agent in a neutral City (without a control disc) modifies its value by 1 in favor of the Agent’s owner, and by 1 against all other players during Annexations and Sieges.

An Agent in an enemy City lowers its value by 1 if you besiege that City.

An Agent in a friendly City has no effect on its value.



Ancona — neutral City with a red Agent: Value –1 for Red; +1 for everyone else (during an Annexation or a Siege).

Siena — City with red Control disc and green [enemy] Agent: Value –1 for Green (during a Siege).

Spoletto — City with blue Control disc and Agent: Value is unchanged, but it prevents another Agent from going there as long as this one is present.

How an Agent Affects an Alliance

During the Winter phase, you will have the option of Forming or Appropriating Alliances with the Major Powers of the era.

The available Alliances are depicted on the Italy board.

Place your Agent in the rightmost Alliance space if it is another player’s Alliance, on your Control disc if it is your own, and on the left space if it is no one’s.

Having an Agent on an Alliance gives you a discount of 1 symbol (of your choice) to form this Alliance, or if it’s an opponent’s Alliance it enables you to appropriate the Alliance by paying the normal Alliance cost.

Ottoman Empire

Red has a discount of any 1 symbol to ally with the Ottoman Empire.

An enemy Agent on your Alliance prevents you from using its Bonus.

Kingdom of France

Red (and only Red) can appropriate Blue’s Alliance with the Kingdom of France (at the normal cost). Additionally, Blue cannot use the Alliance Bonus, which is blocked by the red Agent.

For details on how Alliances work, see **Phase 2: Winter, E - Alliances** (Winter is when Alliances are made or appropriated).

B - END OF SPRING

Resolving Sieges

Once everyone has performed their Action, it’s time to resolve Sieges in progress.

If you have one or more Troops around a City that is not under your control (neutral City, or City controlled by another player), then you have begun a Siege.

Starting with the 1st player in turn order, each player takes one turn to resolve all Sieges that player has begun; you get to choose the order in which you resolve your Sieges.

WAR BONUS



When resolving your Sieges, you can spend 1 or more +1 War Bonus tokens that you got from performing the Wage War action.

Additionally, both you and the defender can use War Bonuses from your available Cortigiano cards by flipping them to their Resources Exhausted side.

While resolving the Siege, announce using your Bonuses one by one, starting with you, then the defender, then you, and so on.



Most War Bonuses required paying 1 florin to use them.

You can only use each War Bonus once per Siege (you cannot pay multiple times to use it multiple times).

Once both you and the defender have “passed” (declined to use any further Bonuses), the Siege is complete.

After resolving all of your Sieges, discard all of your remaining +1 War Bonus tokens.

SPECIAL WAR BONUSES

Clarifications of the general rules:



The Patronage Bonus **Leonardo da Vinci** grants a +1 War Bonus that can be used once per Siege by paying 1 florin each time.



The Patronage Bonus **Bastion Fort** grants a +2 defense-only Bonus for defending against all Sieges against you.



The Patronage Bonus **Cannons** grants a +2 War Bonus (by paying 1 florin) during a Siege if its Resources Available side is up, and you flip it to its Resources Exhausted side.



The Alliance with the **Kingdom of France** grants a +2 War Bonus that can be used during a Siege, but it deactivates the Bonus (see **Phase 2: Winter, E - Alliances**).

Procedure for Resolving Sieges

Evaluate each player’s combat strength:

ATTACKER
+1 per Troop present
+1 per War Bonus used
DEFENDER
Base = Value of the City (1 – 4)
–1 if the attacker has an Agent here
Neutral City
+1 if an Agent belonging to anyone but the attacker is present
City controlled by a player
+1 per Troop present belonging to this player
+1 per War Bonus used



- **Attacker:** 2 (Troops) + 1 (War Bonus) = 3
- **Siena:** 3 (City value) – 1 (Agent) = 2



- **Attacker:** 2 (Troops) = 2
- **Benevento:** 2 (City value) + 1 (enemy Agent) = 3



- **Attacker:** 3 (Troops) + 1 (War Bonus) = 4
- **Parma:** 1 (City value) + 1 (Troop) = 2



- **Attacker:** 3 (Troops) + 1 (War Bonus) = 4
- **Ravenna:** 2 (City value) + 1 (Troop) + 1 (War Bonus) – 1 (red Agent) = 3

• VICTORY & TROPHY

As the attacker, if your combat strength is **greater than** the defender's, you are victorious, and proceed as follows.

If the City had a final combat strength of 3 or more, you automatically lose 1 attacking Troop. Then, you lose 1 attacking Troop for each defending Troop, and the defender loses all of their defending Troops. Even if you have no attacking Troops left, your victory stands (you had more combat strength when it mattered).

Lost Troops return to their owners, who can recruit them again in the following Winter.

You seize control of the City: **Place one of your Control discs on it, and take the City tile** and place it in your Domain, **Resources Exhausted** side up, due to the rigors of the Siege.

- If the City was **neutral**, take the City tile from the supply.
- If the City was **controlled** by an opponent, take the City tile from that opponent. Furthermore, you earn a Trophy in the form of the vanquished opponent's Control disc; place it on the **Trophy** space in your Palace.



You can only have one Trophy disc per opponent, but you can still besiege the Cities of a player from whom you've already taken a Trophy.

Each Trophy you earn will be worth 2 Prestige Points at the end of the game.

If the City has a Cathedral, you also take a Cathedral tile from the vanquished opponent; place it in your Domain, **Resources Exhausted** side up, due to the rigors of the Siege.

Each Cathedral tile you have at the end of the game will be worth 1 Prestige Point.

• DEFEAT & RETREAT

As the attacker, if your combat strength is less than or equal to the defender's, you are defeated, and proceed as follows.

- You immediately lose 1 Troop.
- All of your Troops remaining there must then retreat to a City under your control, directly adjacent, without having to spend any Cavalry symbols (they retreat on foot).
- If the City you attacked was a Port, you also have the option to withdraw Troops to another Port City you control by spending 1 Ship per sea each Troop traverses.



Red besieged Spoleto, but at 2 versus 2, Red fails to conquer it. Red loses 1 Troop, and the other retreats to Florence (adjacent friendly City).



Green must retreat from Ancona, but cannot retreat by land; Green must pay 1 Ship per Troop that retreats.

- Any attacking Troops that survived but cannot retreat, either because there is no adjacent friendly City, no port access, or you simply don't want to spend the Ships, are lost. You are allowed to choose to lose Troops.

- All Troops you lose return to your supply, and can be recruited again in the following Winter phase.

• BATTLES ON THE PLAINS

If two players have Troops in front of the same neutral City (or a City controlled by a third player), then there will be a Battle on the Plains between the attackers before the Siege of the City. Calculate the various attackers' combat strengths, counting only their Troops and any War Bonuses they opt to use.

IF ONE HAS GREATER COMBAT STRENGTH:

- The defeated player loses all Troops there; the victor loses the same number (or as many as possible).
- The victor can now besiege the City with the remaining Troops. If this prospect is no longer appealing, they will have to retreat from the City at the end of this phase.
- You do not earn a Trophy for winning a Battle on the Plains.
- War Bonuses you use in a Battle on the Plains are spent, and do not apply to the subsequent Siege.

IF THEY ARE TIED:

- Both players lose 1 Troop, and must retreat at the end of this phase.

Attention: Retreats at the end of the phase happen in turn order, after all Sieges are resolved.

Determining the New Turn Order

Each time you seize control or lose control of a City (due to Annexation or Siege), adjust your position on the Cities track of the Prestige board to match the number of Cities you control.

If there are already markers in the new space, your marker goes atop them.

If you control **5 Cities** or more, you unlock an additional Cortigiano space in your Palace, as indicated on the City track.

Once all Sieges have been resolved, and all retreats are complete, set the new Turn Order: **The player with the most Cities is 1st; second-most, 2nd; etc.**

If there is a tie, the top player in the stack goes before the ones below, and so on.

Adjust the markers on the Turn Order track to indicate the new order, and commence the Winter phase.

Phase 2: Winter

SALARIES, PALACE, PURCHASES, ALLIANCES

In turn order, each player performs all **5 steps** of the Winter phase before moving on to the next player:

In this order:

1. Pay the salaries of your Troops in play.
2. You can reorganize your Palace.
3. You can purchase cards or tiles.
4. You can recruit Troops.
5. You can form an Alliance.

Then the next player does all 5 steps.

A - Pay the Salaries of Your Troops

You must pay **the salaries of your Troops** on the Italy board as follows:

- | | | |
|---------------|-----|--|
| 1 or 2 Troops | ▶ 0 | If you cannot pay in full, or prefer not to pay in full, you must remove the unpaid Troops from the Italy board. |
| 3 or 4 Troops | ▶ 1 | |
| 5 or 6 Troops | ▶ 2 | |

B - Reorganize Your Palace

You can freely rearrange one or more of the cards in your Palace, respecting both the general rules for placing them and the following reorganization rules:

- Reposition the cards one at a time.
- You cannot move a card into or out of a Room with any of the following in it: your Action marker, an Indulgence card, an enemy Agent.
- You can only move a Cortigiano card to a Room or another Cortigiano space if the card's Resources Available side is up.
- If you remove a card from a Room, it must go Resources Exhausted side up on an empty Cortigiano space.
- You cannot leave an Action-less card by itself in a Room.

Note: You cannot move a card directly from one Room of your Palace to another; it must go through a Cortigiano space. Furthermore, removing a card from a Room (or moving a Resources-Available Cortigiano card to another Cortigiano space) requires an empty Cortigiano space. So, you cannot move a card from one Room of the Palace to another Room during the same Winter, nor can you directly swap two Resources-Available Cortigiano cards.

• AVAILABLE CORTIGIANO SPACES

You have 3 Cortigiano spaces available at the beginning of the game (1 on the left of your Palace, and 2 on the right). You can gain access to up to 3 additional spaces (shaded) by purchasing Title tiles, by obtaining certain Patronage Bonuses, or by controlling at least 5 Cities (as indicated on the Cities track).

The additional spaces provided by Title tiles are always available, even if the tile's Resources Exhausted side is up: Although the rest of the face is amber, this effect is not.



BEFORE

Palace reorganization example:

The Neapolitan player has no more empty Cortigiano spaces to reorganize the Palace, and thus must juggle things a bit:

- 1 Ferdinand II of Naples becomes an Improvement beneath the Gonfalonier.
- 2 The Merchant moves from its Cortigiano space to the one that was just freed.

- 3 The Improvement card beneath Alfonso, Duke of Calabria (an Ambassador) leaves the Room and goes Resources Exhausted side up in the empty Cortigiano space to its right.

This player could not:

- Move Federico III da Montefeltro because the card's Resources Exhausted side is up.
- Change any of the cards under the Action marker, or under the Indulgence card.

After reorganizing, the Neapolitan Palace looks like this.



AFTER

Additional Cortigiano spaces you acquire (the shaded ones) are not "set in stone". That is to say that if you move a card from one to a Room, the next card to become a Cortigiano card can go to a different shaded space if you like.

If you have acquired additional Cortigiano spaces, you can use them even if some of your original spaces are empty.

A Cortigiano space is empty if it is available and unoccupied by a card. You can free any Cortigiano space occupied by a card, even if its Resources Exhausted side is up, by discarding the card. If it is a Notable card, it returns to the display, available for purchase again. If it is a Family card, remove it from the game.

If you have an additional Cortigiano space because you control at least 5 Cities, and the number of Cities you control drops below 5, you choose which shaded Cortigiano space you lose. If there was a card in it, you must immediately move it to another Cortigiano space, or discard it (even if its Resources Exhausted side is up).

C - Purchase Cards and/or Tiles

You can purchase as many different cards and tiles as you wish by paying the cost depicted in the upper-left corner of each.

All purchases made during this phase are considered to happen simultaneously, so you cannot purchase a card/tile and use its resources in the same phase to pay for something else. As with paying for Actions, you can only use 1 type of symbol per card/tile bottom for your total purchase.

You must place cards that you purchase Resources Available side up on an empty Cortigiano space. Remember that you can discard to free one up; in fact, you can discard a card you used to pay for your purchases!

You must place tiles that you purchase (except Cathedral tiles) Resources Available side up in your Domain.

Attention: Restrictions on purchases

You are only allowed to own 1 copy (each) of the **Cardinal** Notable card, the **Guild** tile, and the **Title** tiles bearing the ① symbol in the upper-right corner.

• TITLE TILES

During the game, you can purchase a **Duchy** tile, as well as a **Principality** tile. **Take the tile bearing your coat of arms.**

You can also purchase a **Kingdom** tile or a **Republic** tile; however, these two regimes are incompatible, so **you can only have 1 of the 2.** (There are only 2 copies of each.)





• CATHEDRAL TILES

You can only purchase a Cathedral tile if you control a City with a base value of 3 – 4, that doesn't already have a Cathedral on it.

When you purchase a Cathedral tile, you must place it **Resources Exhausted** side up in your Domain, and place a Cathedral pawn on the City on the Italy map.



Yellow can build a Cathedral in Palermo because this city has a base value of 3.

If you lose control of the City during a Siege, you must give both the City tile and the Cathedral tile to the conqueror; however, both flip to their Resources Exhausted side due to the Siege.

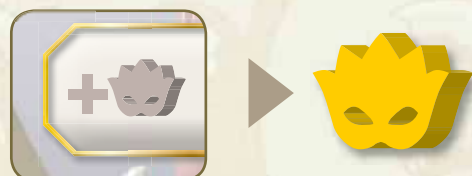
There are only **5 Cathedrals** available for the entire game; it is a very limited supply!

Each Cathedral tile you have at the end of the game will earn you 1 Prestige Point.

• ADDITIONAL AGENTS

When you obtain a card with an Agent symbol, you also obtain an additional available Agent meeple, which you can place next year with a Scheme action.

You are limited to a total of 5 Agents (each).



You cannot purchase the same card or tile several times in the same Winter phase; however, you could buy an identical card or tile next Year (unless you are only allowed to own one copy of that particular card/tile).

D – Recruit Troops

You can recruit Troops in a City you control.

Recruiting 1 Troop in one of your **Starting Cities** under your control (i.e. with your coat of arms) costs 1 florin; recruiting in a City you annexed or conquered costs 3 florins.

You cannot recruit in a Starting City that an opponent controls.

You are limited to a total of 6 Troops (each).

E – Form or Appropriate an Alliance

Each Winter, you can form or appropriate **one** Alliance with one of the three Major Powers of the era: *the Kingdom of France, the Holy Roman Empire, or the Ottoman Empire.*

Each **Major Power** can only be allied with a single player at a time.

The Cost to form an Alliance is indicated on the Italy board; however, you get a discount of 1 symbol (of your choice) if you have an **Agent** on this Alliance (see **Intrigue** action) and the Alliance has not been formed with another player. Then place your disc on the left space of that Alliance to indicate that you have formed it.

If you have an **Agent on an Alliance formed by another player**, you can appropriate that Alliance (but only for yourself) by paying its normal cost (without discount). Return the disc there to its owner and place your own on the left space, then place your Agent atop it.

When you form or appropriate an alliance, leave your Agent on the Major Power.

Although you can only form or appropriate a single Alliance per Winter phase, you can become allied with several Major Powers over the course of several Years.



Each Alliance grants a Bonus during the game. At the end of the game, each Alliance is worth 1 Prestige Point (unless an enemy Agent is still there).

You can use an Alliance Bonus if your disc is on its left space, and no enemy Agent is on that Alliance. When you use the Bonus, shift your disc to the right space (covering the Bonus, showing that it's used).

To be able to use the Bonus again, you must use a Govern action and pay 1 Crown or 1 Cross per Bonus you wish to reactivate (then move your disc back to the left space).



In this situation, any player can form an Alliance with the Ottoman Empire by paying 1 Crown and 3 Ships. Because Green has an Agent there, Green would get a discount of any 1 symbol when forming this Alliance.



In this case, the Ottoman Empire is allied with Green. Because there is a red Agent there:
- Green cannot use the Alliance Bonus (nor would Green score 1 Prestige Point at the end of the game).
- Red (and only Red) can appropriate the Alliance by paying its undiscounted cost.



In this example, the Ottoman Empire is allied with Green. Because the disc is on the left space, Green can use the Alliance Bonus (providing 2 Ship symbols). Once Green uses this bonus, the disc moves to the right space.



The Ottoman Empire is allied with Green, but the disc is on the right space. This indicates (by covering the Bonus) that Green has already used the Alliance Bonus. To "reload" the Bonus, Green would need to perform a Govern action and spend 1 Crown or 1 Cross to reactivate the Bonus, moving the disc to the left space.

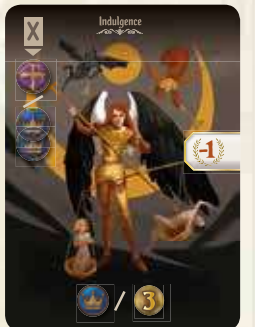
The Bonuses for the different Alliances:

- **Kingdom of France:** +2 War Bonus usable during a Siege or Battle on the Plains (see Wage War action)
- **Ottoman Empire:** 2 Ship symbols usable (at the same time) during an Annex, Wage War, or Trade action, or when retreating.
- **Holy Roman Empire:** 1 Cross symbol usable during an action, a purchase, or to rid yourself of an Indulgence. This Cross also counts when tallying religious influence at the end of the game (unless there is an enemy Agent on this Alliance, of course).

F – Request an Indulgence

During Winter (just like in Spring), you can request an Indulgence at any time, as long as the Palace Room with your Action marker does not already have an Indulgence card on it.

This grants you 1 Crown which you must use immediately, or 3 florins that go into your treasury.



Then place an Indulgence card on the Room under your Action marker.

End of the Game

The endgame is triggered when, at the end of Spring, at least one of the following conditions is met:

- Players control all Cities on the Italy board (no neutral Cities remain).
- Someone has reached the end of the Cities track (they control 8 Cities or more).
- Someone has reached the end of the Patronage track.

Everyone finishes the Year by playing a final Winter phase, after which the game ends.

Next, tally the Prestige Points.

Prestige & Victory

• **Controlling Cities:** According to your position on the Cities track (0 – 6 Prestige Points). The player furthest along the track earns a bonus of 1 Prestige Point (if it's a tie, each tied player gets the bonus).

• **Supporting the arts and sciences:** According to your position on the Patronage track (0 – 3 Prestige Points). The player furthest along the track earns a bonus of 1 Prestige Point (if it's a tie, each tied player gets the bonus).

• **Cards/Tiles:** Certain cards in your Palace or tiles in your Domain grant you the Prestige Points indicated on them, even if their Resources Exhausted side is showing.

• **Religious Influence:** Prestige Points are awarded based on how each player ranks in their total number of Cross symbols. That total includes:

- Cards in your Palace and tiles in your Domain (even if their Resources Exhausted side is showing).
- The Alliance with the Holy Roman Empire (unless an enemy Agent is there).
- Certain Patronage Bonuses (Duomo and Sistine Chapel).

The awards are as follows, in descending order according to the number of Crosses you have:

3-player game: 4, 2, and 0 Prestige Points.

4-player game: 4, 2, 1, and 0 Prestige Points.

5-player game: 4, 2, 1, 0, and 0 Prestige Points.

If there is a tie, each tied player is awarded the points for the next-lower rank.

Example: In a 4- or 5-player game, if 2 players tied for 1st, each would receive 2 points, and 3rd would receive 1 as usual.

• **Military Prestige:** 2 Prestige Points per Trophy (you can only have 1 Trophy from each opponent).

• **Alliances:** 1 Prestige Point per Alliance you have without an enemy Agent (it doesn't matter whether the Bonus is available).

• **Indulgences:** -1 Prestige Point per Indulgence card still in your Palace

The player with the most Prestige Points is proclaimed the Master of Italy.

If there is a tie, the tied player with more total Crowns in their Palace and Domain (on cards and tiles, whether Resources Available or Resources Exhausted).

If there is still a tie, the tied players simply must share the power.

The winning score is generally in the neighborhood of 15 Prestige Points.



Credits

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And so Virtù, long called "The Masters of Italy", would never have been possible without the support of Corinne, my wife, and her understanding of my passion for gaming; without Franck and the



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