

Genesis Trials Rulebook

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1. Introduction

Welcome to Genesis Trials, a strategic card game of conviction and conflict. Players compete using decks representing ideological or technological factions in a battle to reduce their opponents' Life totals to zero.

Who Will You Become?

In Genesis Trials, Protagonists and Antagonists represent clashing worldviews: faith-driven conviction versus power-driven ambition. Both factions use science and technology, but they wield them in service of very different ends.

The Genesis Trust, Alessandro's Cabal, and other factions compete for survival, influence, and ultimate authority over humanity's future.

Player Requirements:

- Players: 2-4
- Ages: 12+ (suggested)
- Playtime: 45–75 minutes (Standard Play), 90–120 minutes (Epic Play)

2. Components

Genesis Trials is played using cards from Starter Decks, Booster Packs, and other official Genesis Trials products.

Tracking Components

- **Life Tracking:** Each player tracks their Life using a D20 die (not included) or another suitable method.
- **Resource Tracking:**
 - Protagonists track Faith and Science resources.
 - Antagonists track Strength and Science resources.
 - Resources may be tracked using dice, tokens, counters, apps, or other agreed-upon methods.

Products

Genesis Trials products may include:

- Starter Decks
- Booster Packs
- Complete Collections
- Promotional or special-release cards

Card counts and product contents may vary by release.

3. Card Types (with Visuals)

See Section 9A for Author of the Trust special rules.

The following diagram shows the parts of each card type, labeled for clarity:

A: Card Name

E: Effects

B: Card Type

F: Flavor Text

C: Attack/Defense Stats

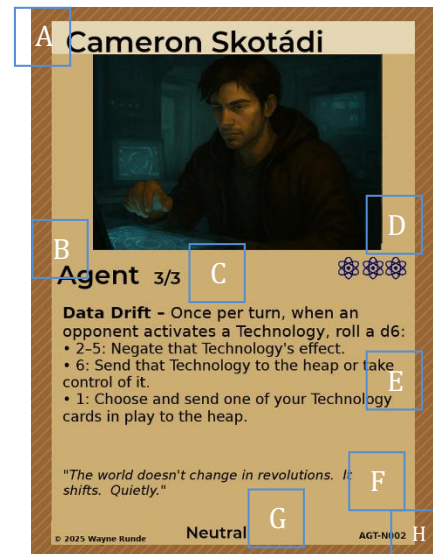
G: Subgroup

D: Resource Cost

H: Card ID

The border is color coded for faction (Protagonist is blue, Antagonist is red, and Neutral is tan) with patterns for the color-vision-impaired ('/' for Neutral, '\ ' for Antagonist and 'X' for Protagonists)

Agent Example: Basic Agent card layout follows the structure shown in the Anatomy diagram.



Agent cards

Cameron Skotádi



Agent 3/3

Data Drift – Once per turn, when an opponent activates a Technology, roll a d6:

- 2–5: Negate that Technology's effect.
- 6: Send that Technology to the heap or take control of it.
- 1: Choose and send one of your Technology cards in play to the heap.

"The world doesn't change in revolutions. It shifts. Quietly."

© 2025 Wayne Runde Neutral AGT-N002

Paragon cards

Chris Ballanger



Agent (Paragon) 6/6

Defender of the Redeemed – When a Redeemed Agent is destroyed, Chris gains 1 Valor.

Shield of Grace – Once per turn, prevent all damage to one Protagonist Agent.

If Chris is defeated, create a 3/3 "Faithful Remnant" token with Shield 1.

"With Him are strength and sound wisdom." (Job 12:13)

© 2025 Wayne Runde The Redeemed AGT-P028

Stronghold cards

Atlantis



Stronghold

Activate: Gain 2 Faith and 1 Science. If your Life is below 10, also regain 1 Life.

"The Lord is our strength." (Isaiah 12:2)

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Principle cards

Love



Principle

Once per turn, when one of your Agents is destroyed, gain 1 Faith resources. Then roll a d6:

- 5–6: Draw a card
- 3–4: Shuffle that Agent into your deck
- 1: Lose 1 Faith resource

"The greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

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Operation cards

Alessandro's Directive



Operation

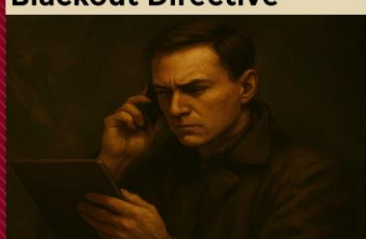
Destroy an enemy Technology with cost 2 or less, or any one Stronghold.

"Erase the foundation, and the structure will follow."

© 2025 Wayne Runde Alessandro's Cabal OP-A004

Event cards

Blackout Directive



Event

Cancel an enemy Event or Operation.

"We decide what the battlefield remembers."

© 2025 Wayne Runde Alessandro's Cabal EV-A001

Technology cards



Special cards



4. Setup and Zones

Deck Size:

- Standard Format: 50 cards exactly
- Epic Format: 75 cards exactly

Card Copies:

- Maximum 1 copy per card, except Principles (up to 3 copies allowed per deck).

Game Setup:

Each player begins with 20 Life.

Before drawing an opening hand, each player chooses:

- 1 Principle card from their deck and places it face down in their Principle Zone.
- 1 Paragon from their deck to be their Chairman for that game and sets it aside.

The starting Principle and Chairman are part of the deck for deck-size requirements, but they are not part of the player's 7-card opening hand.

After choosing the starting Principle and Chairman, each player shuffles the remaining deck and draws 7 cards to form their opening hand.

Players do not begin with cards in play. At the start of each player's first turn, before the Refresh Phase, that player reveals their starting Principle and puts it into play. The Chairman does not begin in play and may be brought into the Paragon Zone later by paying its cost.

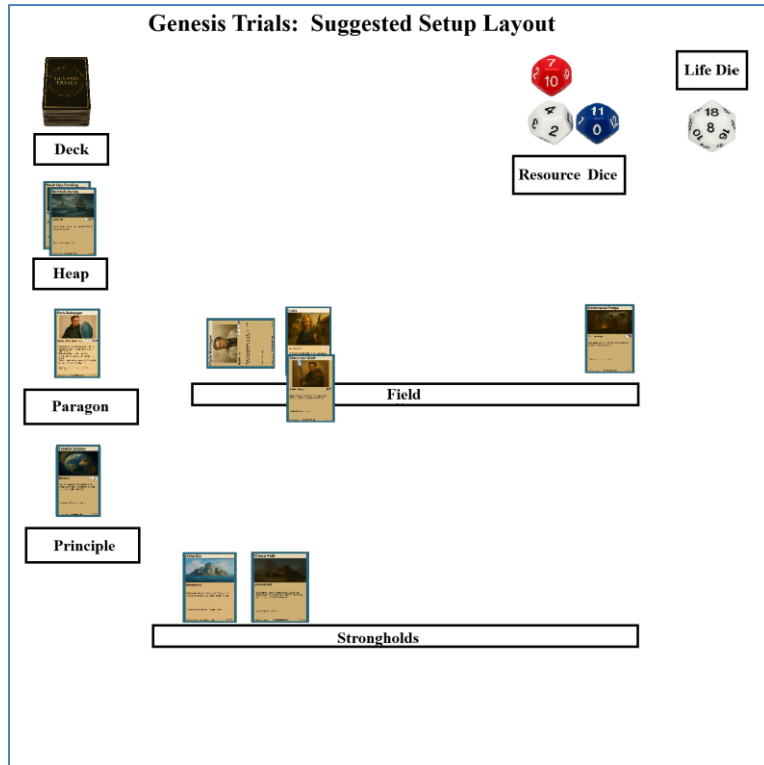
Starting Hand Rule

At the beginning of the game, each player:

- Chooses 1 Principle card from their deck and places it face down in their Principle Zone.
- Chooses 1 Paragon from their deck to be their Chairman for that game and sets it aside. The Chairman does not begin in play.
- Shuffles the remaining deck.
- Draws 7 cards from the remaining deck to form their opening hand.
- At the start of their first turn, before the Refresh Phase, the starting Principle is revealed and enters play.

Note: The starting Principle and Chairman are part of your deck for deck-size requirements, but they are not part of your 7-card opening hand. The Chairman may be brought into the Paragon Zone later by paying its cost.

Optional Variation: If you prefer a randomized experience, each player may draw their starting Principle from a predefined pool at the start of the game instead of selecting it during deckbuilding.



“This layout is a suggested format for clarity and ease of play. Players may arrange zones in a way that fits their style, as long as the card types remain clear and accessible.”

5. Turn Structure Overview

- **Refresh Phase:** Refresh all exhausted Strongholds, Agents, and Technologies. End any “until end of turn” effects.
- **Draw Phase:** Draw one card from your deck.
- **Resource Phase:** Activate each Stronghold once per turn to generate resources. Bank resources. Note: You may bank up to 12 total resources of each type you use. Excess resources beyond 12 are lost.
- **Deployment Phase:** Spend resources to deploy Agents, Technologies, Operations, Principles, or Events.
- **Combat/Action Phase:** You may attack with Agents, or activate their abilities, but not both in the same turn unless specified. Perform any Bonus Actions. If a card allows a Stronghold to be reactivated, activate it again this turn.
- **End:** Discard down to maximum hand size (default 10, unless altered by card effects). End your turn.

Refresh Phase

- Refresh all exhausted cards
- Remove end-of-turn effects

Draw Phase

- Draw 1 card

Resource Phase

- Gain resources from Strongholds
- Use Stronghold effects

Deployment Phase

- Play cards (Agents, Operations, Events, Technologies, etc.)
- Activate abilities and effects (unless otherwise restricted)

Combat Phase

- Declare attackers
- Opponent declares blockers
- Resolve combat

End Phase

- Discard down to hand limit, if any

6. Playing Cards and Resources

Cards require payment in **Faith** , **Strength** , or **Science** , shown by icons to the right of the artwork on each card.

Players use dice to track available resources. **Strongholds generate these resources.**

Players begin with **zero resources**. Resources are generated by Strongholds starting during the **Resource Phase** each turn.

Resource Limits

- **Players may bank up to 12 of each type of resource they use.**
Any resources gained beyond 12 in a single type are lost immediately.
- **Protagonists:** 12 Faith, 12 Science
- **Antagonists:** 12 Strength, 12 Science

Note: Each Stronghold can be activated once per turn unless specified otherwise.

7. Combat Rules

Agents may attack once per turn unless otherwise stated. An Agent that attacks becomes exhausted. Damage dealt to Agents is cleared at the end of each turn. Exhausted Agents cannot attack or use abilities again unless refreshed.

When an Agent blocks, it deals damage back equal to its Defense unless a card says otherwise.

Combat flow: “Player A attacks with Agent X, which has 3 Power. Player B blocks with Agent Y, which has 2 Defense. Agent X deals 3 damage to Agent Y. Agent Y deals 2 damage back to Agent X. If an Agent takes damage equal to or greater than its Defense, it is defeated and sent to the Heap.”

Combat Flow:

- The Falcon attacks (6 Power)
- Chris Ballanger blocks (6 Endurance)
- The Falcon deals 6 damage to Chris Ballanger
- Chris Ballanger deals 6 damage to The Falcon
- Both are defeated and go to the Heap



8. Strongholds, Paragons, and Principles

Strongholds produce resources and support playstyles. Paragons are powerful agents with special synergy. Each player may have only one Principle in play.

8A. Paragons and the Paragon Zone

Before the game begins, each player chooses one Paragon from their deck to be their Chairman for that game and sets it aside. This Chairman does not begin in play and is not part of your opening hand.

During your Deployment Phase, you may pay your Chairman's cost to bring it into play in your Paragon Zone. A Chairman in the Paragon Zone is considered in play.

Other Paragon cards in your deck may still be played normally as Agents, but they do not count as your Chairman unless a card or rule specifically says otherwise.

8B. Principles, Anarchy, and Deck Limits

- Each deck may include up to **3 Principles** (maximum 1 copy of each).
- Each player chooses **1 Principle** from their deck and places it face down in the Principle Zone. At the start of that player's first turn, before the Refresh Phase, it is revealed and put into play.
- If a player controls no active Principle, they enter **Anarchy**:
 - While in Anarchy, that player's Agents have -1 Defense from their printed defense stat. This reduction is not cumulative and ends when a new Principle is restored.
 - That player may not activate effects from Agents, Strongholds, Operations, or Technologies while in Anarchy.
 - Strongholds still generate resources, but any other effects are ignored.
- **Restoring a Principle**:
 - During your Deployment Phase:
 - Pay 3 resources to search your deck for a Principle and place it in the Principle Zone.
 - Or pay 5 resources to return a Principle from your Heap to the Principle Zone.
 - Restoring a Principle ends your turn immediately.

9. Special Abilities and Timing

Interrupts may be played out of sequence. Conditions like 'while Life is 10 or less' affect stats or keywords (e.g., Shield).

9A. Author of the Trust (Special Card Rule)

Author of the Trust is a rare special Technology card that represents the book's author and game's creator. It serves as a thematic bridge between the novels and gameplay. This card is designed to support narrative immersion and adds a unique gameplay element tied to your faction's identity.

- You may replay Author of the Trust from your hand at any time your Chairman is in play, increasing its cost by +1 resource of any type each time, as with redeployment of your Chairman.
- If Author of the Trust is discarded or sent to the Heap from your hand by any effect (including opponent actions), exile it instead.
- If an effect would destroy Author of the Trust or send it from the field to the Heap, return Author of the Trust to your hand instead. Your Chairman remains in the Paragon Zone unless the effect also removes the Chairman.
- If your Chairman leaves play while Author of the Trust is on the field, return Author of the Trust from the field to your hand. If returning Author of the Trust causes you to exceed your maximum hand size, discard down to your hand limit during your End Phase as normal.
- Author of the Trust may only be played while your Chairman is in play.
- Only one copy of this card may be included in a deck.

10. Victory Conditions

If a player's Life reaches 0, they lose. If a player must draw a card but cannot, they lose.

11. Glossary of Terms

Activate: To use a card's ability, usually by exhausting the card or paying a cost.

Agent: A character card, such as a Paragon or Operative, that can attack, defend, or use abilities.

Anarchy: A state triggered when a player controls no active Principle. While in Anarchy, that player's Agents have -1 Defense from their printed defense stat, that player may not activate card effects, and gameplay is restricted until a new Principle is restored. This Defense reduction is not cumulative.

Chairman: The Paragon chosen before the game to represent your side. Your Chairman begins set aside and may be brought into the Paragon Zone later by paying its cost. Other Paragon cards may still be played normally as Agents, but they do not count as your Chairman unless a card or rule says otherwise.

Cost: The number and type of resources, such as Science, Strength, or Faith, you must spend to play a card.

Decking Out: Losing by being required to draw from an empty deck.

Defense: The value used to determine how much combat damage an Agent can withstand.

Deployment Delay: A newly played Agent cannot attack or use exhaust abilities on the turn it enters play unless it has Haste or another effect says otherwise.

Draw: To take a card from the top of your deck and add it to your hand.

Endurance: A defense stat.

Enter Play: When a card is played and enters the field. “When this card enters play” effects happen at that time.

Exhaust: To turn a card sideways, usually to show that it has attacked or used an ability this turn.

Exhaust Ability: An ability that requires a card to exhaust as part of its cost or effect. Exhaust abilities usually use wording such as “Exhaust this card” or “Exhaust [card name].”

Exhausted: A card turned sideways to show it has been used this turn. Exhausted cards cannot attack or defend until refreshed.

Faith: A resource exclusive to Protagonists.

Haste: An ability that allows a newly played Agent to attack or use exhaust abilities on the turn it enters play.

Heap / Scrap Heap: Your discard pile.

Interrupt: A card that may be played during an opponent’s turn or in response to another card or effect.

Ongoing: A card effect that remains active while the card is in play.

Paragon: A powerful Agent card with a unique ability. One Paragon is chosen before the game as your Chairman. Other Paragon cards may still be played normally as Agents, but they do not count as your Chairman unless a card or rule says otherwise.

Paragon Zone: The area of play where your Chairman is placed after it enters play. A Chairman in the Paragon Zone is considered in play.

Power: The attack strength of Antagonists.

Refresh: To return a card to its upright position, ready to act again.

Science: A resource available to both Antagonists and Protagonists.

Shield: A defense stat.

shield: A damage-prevention or damage-reduction effect that reduces incoming damage by the listed amount.

Strength: A resource exclusive to Antagonists.

Stronghold: A location or support card with ongoing effects; may also act as a base of operations.

Trigger: A card effect that automatically activates when a specific condition is met, such as “when this card enters play.”

Turn: A full cycle consisting of the Refresh, Draw, Resource, Deployment, Combat/Action, and End phases.

Valor: The attack strength of Protagonists.

Zone: An area of play where cards are placed.

12. Edge Cases & Reminders

Hand Limit: Default 10 cards, unless modified by card effects.

Excess Resources: Players may bank up to 12 of each resource type they use. Resources gained beyond 12 in a single type are lost immediately.

Starting Resources: Players begin with zero resources. Resources are generated by Strongholds.

Exhausted Agents: Exhausted Agents cannot attack or defend until refreshed.

Principles: Only 1 active Principle is allowed at a time.

Anarchy: See Glossary. Anarchy effects occur if no Principle is active.

13. Errata and Terminology Clarification

In these rules, **Shield** (capitalized) refers to a defense stat, while **shield** (lowercase) refers to a damage-prevention or damage-reduction effect.

Some printed cards use **Endurance** and others use **Shield**. **Defense** is the general term for an Agent's ability to withstand combat damage. For all Agents, **Endurance** and **Shield** are equivalent defense stats and may be used interchangeably.

When a card shows or references either **Endurance** or **Shield**, use the printed value as that Agent's defense in combat.

When a card says "**shield**" in an effect, such as "gain shield" or "reduce incoming damage," treat **shield** as a damage-prevention or damage-reduction effect.

14. Quick Reference Summary

Turn Order: Refresh → Draw → Resource → Deployment → Combat/Action → End

Resource Types: Faith (white), Strength (red), Science (blue)

Victory: Reduce each opponent's Life total to 0.

15. Credits

Genesis Trials was created by Wayne Runde.

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- Adam Runde
- Cameron McGeorge
- Jim Vredenburgh
- Ken Franklin (TGC Sanity Reviewer)
- Players and supporters who helped refine the mechanics through feedback and testing
- ... and others

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