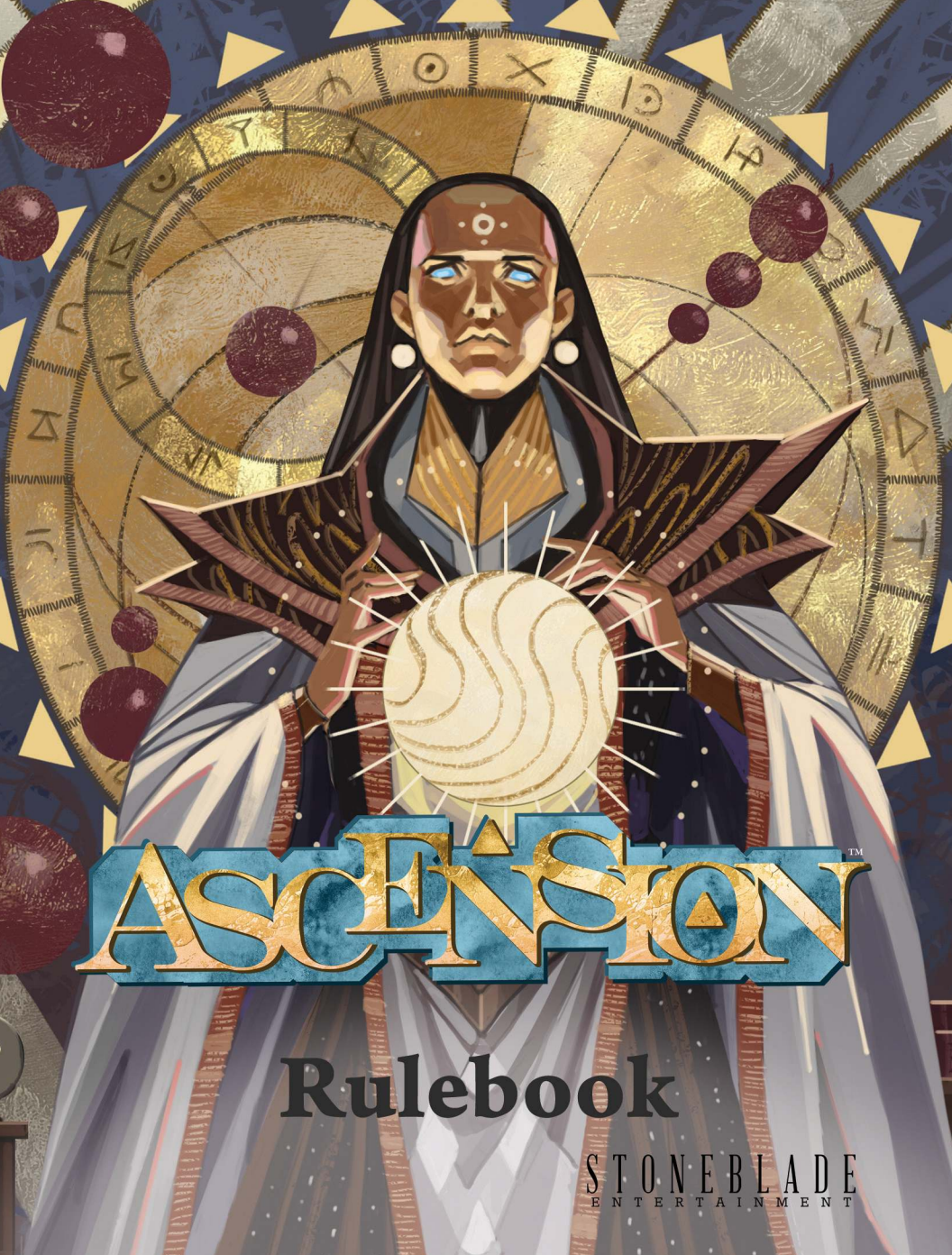




ASCENSION™

Rulebook

STONEBLADE
ENTERTAINMENT

ASCENSION™

Welcome to the world of Vigil.

For millennia, Vigil has been isolated and protected from the dangers of the other realms. Now, the barrier between the dimensions is collapsing, and the Avatars of a fallen God, Samael, has arrived with an army of monsters from the beyond. You are one of the few warriors capable of facing this threat and protecting Vigil from annihilation, but you cannot do it alone. You must gather mighty heroes and powerful constructs to aid you in battle.

The person who gains the most Honor will ascend to become the eternal champion and lead their army to defeat Samael and save the world!

Getting Started

In *Ascension* you will compete to gain Honor and attempt to build an army capable of defeating The Avatar of the Fallen and his monster hordes. Starting with a small group of loyal but untrained followers, you will acquire mighty Heroes and powerful Constructs to aid you in your quest to defeat evil and achieve victory.

Ascension is a deck-building game. Each player begins the game with the same initial deck of cards, but you will customize and grow your deck's power as you play. On your turn, you will use your cards as resources to acquire new Hero and Construct cards for your deck or to defeat Monsters and earn their rewards. At the end of the game, the player with the most Honor from acquired cards and Monster rewards is the winner!

With a decade of history, millions of players, and over a dozen expansions, there are limitless ways to play *Ascension*. *Ascension: Fourth Edition* gives you a perfect starting point. Each *Ascension* set is a stand-alone game with unique mechanics bringing new experiences to a classic deckbuilding game. To find out more in the world of *Ascension*, visit stoneblade.com.

Contents

- 100 Black-border Center Deck cards
- 41 Silver-border 'Always Available' cards (20 Mystic, 20 Heavy Infantry, & 1 Cultist)
- 40 White-border 'Starter' cards (4 Starting decks of 8 Apprentice & 2 Militia each)
- 50 Honor tokens (25 large red tokens & 25 small clear tokens)
- 1 Deluxe Game board

Game Layout



Center Deck

Starting Hand (5 cards)

Personal Deck (10 cards: 8 Apprentice & 2 Militia)

**Starting Deck
(remaining
5 cards)**

Setup

Ascension: Fourth Edition is a 2 to 4-player game. With additional *Ascension™* game expansions, the game can be played with up to 6 players.

Each player should receive an identical starting deck, consisting of 10 white-bordered cards: 8 Apprentice and 2 Militia. These white-bordered cards are the foundation of each player's personal deck, which they will build upon and modify over the course of the game.



At the start of the game, each player shuffles their personal deck, draws 5 cards into their hand, and leaves the other 5 cards face down in their deck.



Arrange the silver-bordered cards (Heavy Infantry, Mystics, and the single Cultist card) into separate face-up piles and place them on their designated spaces on the game board. You may acquire or defeat these 'always available' cards on your turn by spending the required resources.

Shuffle together all the black-bordered cards to form the center deck and place it face down on its designated space on the board. Take 6 cards from the top of the center deck and flip them face up into the spaces on the right side of the board. This forms the center row, where cards can be acquired or defeated by players on their turn.

Place 30 Honor Tokens into the Honor Pool area for each player in the game. Large red Honor tokens are worth 5 points. Small clear Honor tokens are worth 1 point. Randomly determine which player goes first and proceed clockwise from there.

Number of Players	2	3	4
Total Honor Tokens	60★	90★	120★

Hero Cards

Heroes are the allies you recruit to aid you in your quest to save the realm of Vigil. You can use Runes  to acquire new Heroes from the center row to improve your personal deck.

Name

Ascetic of the Lidless Eye

5

Cost

Number of Runes you must spend to acquire this card.

Faction

There are four different factions:

- Enlightened
- Lifebound
- Mechana
- Void

Enlightened Hero

Effect

What the card does when played or in play.

Draw two cards.

Honor

How much Honor this card is worth.

3

Flavor Text

Flavor text has no game effect.

"Devote yourself to the Eye," Dhartha said, "and see all that the universe has to offer."

Rarity & Set Icon

Each  represents a copy of the card in the center deck.

On your turn, you can play any number of Hero cards from your hand. When you play a Hero card, gain the effect listed on the card. Heroes played during your turn will stay in front of you until the end of your turn, whereupon they are moved to your discard pile.

Construct Cards

Constructs are the many weapons, magical items, and fantastic devices you collect to be used in the battle for Vigil. You can use Runes  to acquire new Constructs from the center row to improve your personal deck.



Name
Muramasa

Cost
Number of Runes you must spend to acquire this card.

Faction
There are four different factions:

- Enlightened
- Lifebound
- Mechana
- Void

Effect
What the card does when played or in play.

Flavor Text
Flavor text has no game effect.

Honor
How much Honor this card is worth.

Rarity & Set Icon
Each  represents a copy of the card in the center deck.

Card Details:
The card is a purple Construct card titled "Muramasa". It features an illustration of a sword on a stand surrounded by candles. The card text includes "Void Construct", "Once per turn, gain .", and the flavor text "The last of her swords and bearing her name." The bottom left shows a star icon with the number 4, and the bottom right shows a set icon with the number 1.

On your turn, you may play any number of Constructs from your hand. Once played, Constructs stay in front of you and grant you their effects. They are not put in your discard pile at the end of the turn; they continue to help you turn-after-turn! However, they can be destroyed by some Monster effects. If your Construct is destroyed, immediately place it in your discard pile. Some cards reference controlling Constructs. You control a Construct while it is in play in front of you, but not while it is in your deck or discard pile.

Monster Cards

Monsters are the forces of evil that are trying to break through and destroy the world of Vigil. You may spend Power  to defeat monsters in the center row, which will send them to the Void and grant you their reward.

Name

Earth Tyrant

6

Cost

Amount of Power you must spend to defeat this card.

Reward

What this monster does when defeated.

Monster

Card Type

Reward: Gain . Draw two cards.

In the caverns below, you will find limitless power surrounded by fire and death.

Flavor Text

Flavor text has no game effect.

Rarity & Set Icon

Each  represents a copy of the card in the center deck.

Monster rewards include Honor , which is the victory condition of *Ascension*. When you earn Honor for defeating a Monster, collect the appropriate number of Honor tokens from the Honor Pool and place them in front of you. Large red tokens are worth 5 Honor, and small clear tokens are worth 1 Honor.

Gameplay

Some cards will have text that contradicts the game rules listed within this rulebook. When this occurs, follow the text on the card.

Turn Breakdown

On your turn, you may take the following actions in any order, as many times as you'd like:

- Play a card to gain Runes (▲), Power (⚡), Honor (★) and other effects.
- Use a Construct you control for its effect.
- Acquire a Hero or Construct by paying its cost and putting it into your discard pile.
- Defeat a Monster to gain Honor and other rewards.

When you have finished, take the following actions to end your turn:

- Place any played Hero cards and all cards remaining in your hand into your discard pile.
- Draw five cards from your personal deck to create your hand for the following turn.

When your personal deck is empty and you need to draw a card (or reveal a card from your deck), reshuffle your discard pile to replenish your personal deck. Each time you shuffle, the cards you've acquired become part of your ever evolving deck. Hero cards played during your turn are only put into your discard pile at the end of your turn, so if you need to replenish your deck in the middle of your turn, don't shuffle in the cards you've played this turn.



If the center deck ever runs out of cards, reshuffle the cards in the Void to replenish it. There should be no Apprentice, Militia, Mystic, or Heavy Infantry cards in the Void or the reshuffled deck. If any have been put there by mistake, be sure to remove them before shuffling.

Playing Cards from Hand

To play a Hero card, take the card from your hand and place it face up in front of you, announce its effect, and follow the instructions on the card. Any choices required by the card must be made at that time, and any conditions for additional effects are then checked. Any  or  generated can be saved and spent until the end of your turn. Heroes will remain in front of you until the end of your turn, when they are moved to your discard pile.

Constructs are played just like Heroes but will remain in play when you end your turn. Construct effects can be used when played and reused again on your following turns.



When you play Spike Vixen from your hand, gain  and draw a card.

Acquiring Cards from the Center Row

You may acquire a Hero or Construct from the center row by spending Runes () equal to the cost listed in the upper-right corner of the card, within the  icon.



Kor costs  to acquire.

You may acquire any number of Heroes or Constructs on your turn, including the 'always available' Mystics and Heavy Infantry, as long as you pay the Rune cost for each card you acquire. When you acquire a card, place it in your discard pile. If it was gained from the center row, replace it with the top card of the center deck (and turn it face up), so that the center row always has 6 cards available.

Defeating Monsters

You may defeat a Monster in the center row by spending Power (🔥) equal to the cost listed in the upper-right corner of the card, within the 🔥 icon.

You may defeat any number of Monsters on your turn, including the always available Cultist, as long as you pay the Power cost for each card you defeat. When you defeat a Monster, banish it to the Void and gain its listed reward. Immediately replace any openings in the center row with the top card of the center deck. The Cultist is always available to defeat and is never banished to the Void. There is no limit to how many times you can defeat the Cultist in a turn.



Earth Tyrant costs 6 🔥 to defeat.

Gaining Honor

When you earn Honor (★) for defeating a Monster, collect the appropriate number of Honor tokens from the Honor Pool and place them in front of you. Large red tokens are worth 5 Honor, small clear tokens are worth 1 Honor.

Monster rewards are not the only ways to gain Honor. Some Hero or Construct cards may grant you Honor when you play them, or when you fulfill certain conditions. Look for the number inside the Honor (★) symbol in the card text to determine how much Honor they provide. (The number in the bottom-left corner of the card is how much Honor the card is worth at the end of the game. Cards that grant Honor will say so in the card's text.)

Banishing Cards

Some card effects will allow you to banish cards, either from the center row or from the cards you own in your hand or discard pile.

When an effect tells you to banish a card from the center row, choose a card from the center row and put it into the Void. Then place the top card of the center deck face up into the row to replace it. Banishing a Monster in the center row this way does not count as defeating it and you do not receive its rewards.

When a card tells you to banish a card in your hand and/or your discard pile, choose a card from that zone to put into the Void. If the chosen card is an Apprentice or Militia, return it to the game box instead of putting it into the Void. If the chosen card is a Heavy Infantry or Mystic, return it to the appropriate 'always available' pile instead of putting it into the Void.

Gain 2.

You may banish a card in your hand or discard pile.

Note: If a card allows you to banish a card in your hand, you cannot banish a card that you've already played during your turn, as that card is no longer in your hand.

Tip: Banishing your weaker cards allows you to draw your powerful cards more frequently over the course of the game. Make sure to banish your Apprentice and Militia cards whenever you get the opportunity!

Ending Your Turn

When you are done playing cards from your hand, acquiring Heroes and Constructs, and defeating Monsters, place any remaining cards in your hand and any Heroes that you played into the discard pile. You will lose all unspent  and .

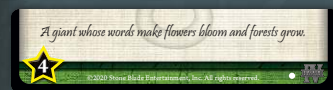
Draw 5 cards to replenish your hand for your next turn. If you run out of cards in your personal deck and need to draw more, reshuffle your discard pile into your deck.

When you end your turn, play passes clockwise to the next player.

Game End

When the final Honor token is taken from the pool, the game ends at the end of the current round (after the last player to start the game takes a turn). This means that in *Ascension*, each player will take the same number of turns by the end of the game. Players can still gain Honor even when the set number of Honor tokens is gone. Use additional Honor tokens from the box to track this.

In addition to the Honor tokens, the cards you have acquired are also worth Honor. The Honor value of each card is indicated by the number in the Honor symbol (★) in the bottom left corner of the card.



When the game ends, count the Honor from all of your acquired Heroes and Constructs (including your hand, deck, discard pile, and Constructs in play) and all of the Honor tokens you have gained during the game. The player with the most total Honor is the winner!

If both players have the same number of Honor points, the player who went last wins.

Glossary

Banish: When a card is banished, it is placed into the Void. Apprentice and Militia cards are returned to the game box, instead of going to the Void. Mystic and Heavy Infantry cards are returned to their respective piles, instead.

Constructs: When you play a Construct from your hand, it remains in play instead of going to your discard pile. You can gain an effect from it every turn while it is in play.

Control: You control a Construct while it is in play in front of you, regardless of which turn you played it. You do not control a Construct while it is in your hand, deck, or discard pile.

Destroy: When a card is destroyed, it is placed into your discard pile from play. This effect usually refers to destroying Constructs that are in play.

Enlightened: One of the four main factions. Enlightened cards are blue.

Hero: When you play a Hero from your hand, you immediately gain the effect listed on the card.

Honor (★): Honor is used to determine victory in *Ascension*. When the game ends, count up the value of your Honor tokens and add the Honor values of all your acquired cards. The player with the most total Honor is the winner.

Lifebound: One of the four main factions. Lifebound cards are green.

Mechana: One of the four main factions. Mechana cards are brown.

Monsters: Monsters in the center row can be defeated using Power (💀). When you defeat a Monster, gain its listed rewards and place it into the Void.

Power (💀): Power is a resource that can be spent to defeat Monsters for their rewards.

Reward: When you defeat a Monster you gain its rewards, which typically include Honor (★).

Runes (🗡️): Runes are a resource that can be spent to acquire Heroes and Constructs.

Unite: Cards with **Unite** have additional effects that occur if you play them in the same turn as other Heroes of the same faction.

The Void: The zone where banished cards are placed. Monsters defeated from the center row are banished to the Void.

Void: One of the four main factions. Void cards are purple.

F.A.Q.

Q: What is the order of events after defeating a Monster in the center row?

A: When you defeat a Monster in the center row, you must first banish it to the Void. You then replace the empty spot in the center row with the top card of the center deck. Finally, you earn the rewards listed on the defeated Monster card.

Q: What happens when I defeat the Cultist? How many times can I defeat them?

A: The Cultist remains in the 'Always Available' area for the entire game. It is never banished to the Void. You may defeat the Cultist any number of times on your turn so long as you can afford to pay the Power cost. For example, if you have generated 8, you may defeat the Cultist up to 4 times, gaining 1 each time you choose to do so.

Q: Do I have to spend all of my resources when acquiring a card or can I save the extra resources for later?

A: Runes (▲) and Power (●) that you generate can be spent until the end of your turn. You can spend a portion of your resources to acquire or defeat a card and use the remaining resources later in the turn. You will only lose all excess resources at the end of your turn. For example, if you play 2 Mystics from your hand to generate 2▲, you could acquire a Hero with a 2▲ cost now and then later acquire another Hero with a 2▲ cost.

Q: When all of the Honor tokens are gone from the pool, can I still earn more Honor?

A: Yes. When the Honor Pool runs out of tokens, it signals that the game is going to end, but you can continue to earn more Honor! When the last Honor token is taken, continue playing until the end of the current round - when the player who started last ends their turn. You can still gain Honor even when there are no tokens left in the pool, using the extra Honor tokens in the box.

Q: What happens if all of the Mystic or Heavy Infantry cards have been acquired? Can I still acquire them some other way?

A: No. There are a limited number of Mystic and Heavy Infantry cards available, and if they run out, you cannot acquire more of them. However, if a Mystic or Heavy Infantry is ever banished, it is placed back into its pile for purchase instead of being put into the Void.

F.A.Q.

Q: What happens if a card leaves the center row at the same time another effect would occur?

A: Whenever a card leaves the center row, it must be immediately replaced with the top card of the center deck. Any time a player is making a decision, or an effect is taking place, the center row should be full.

Q: Can I use 'once per turn' effects on other player's turns?

A: No. You may only use the effects of Constructs you control on your turn.

Q: Do I have to use 'once per turn' effects on my Constructs as soon as I meet their conditions?

A: No. As long as you meet the conditions listed on the Construct, you may wait to gain the effect later in your turn. For example, if you control an All Seeing Eye, you do not need to draw a card as soon as your turn starts.

Q: Can I play an Apprentice to gain a Rune and then banish it with a Void Initiate or Arbiter of the Precipice?

A: No. Heroes you play during your turn are no longer in your hand. They will remain face up in front of you until the end of your turn and then go to your discard pile. If you want to banish a card from your hand, you won't be able to play it and gain its effect.

Q: What happens if my opponent defeats a Sea Tyrant and I only control one Construct?

A: You can keep your Construct.

Q: What happens to the card taken with Xeron, Duke of Lies? Does the player keep that card permanently? Does the other player draw a new replacement card?

A: The player who defeats Xereon takes a random card from the other player's hand and adds it to their own hand. They have now gained ownership of that card for the remainder of the game and may play it on their turn. The other player does not draw a replacement card for the card that was taken.

Have questions about Ascension™ strategies and gameplay? Wondering what happens when you combine this set with other cards and expansions? Visit the official Ascension™ F.A.Q. web page for more info: www.stoneblade.com/faq

Solitaire Gameplay Variant

Here are the rules for a solo mode that you can try on your own:

- Place 50 Honor tokens into the Honor Pool.
- Lay out the center row of 6 cards and take your turn as normal.
- Whenever a card leaves the center row, the remaining cards should slide into any empty spaces to their right, as needed. Then a replacement card should be added from the center deck to fill the resulting empty space on the left.
- After each of your turns, the villain, Samael, takes a turn. Samael acquires or defeats the two cards furthest to the right in the center row.
- All cards acquired by Samael are set aside and are used to determine his Honor total at the end of the game.
- All Monsters defeated by Samael go to the Void, and he receives any Honor listed in their reward. All other rewards from Monsters he defeats are ignored.
- Continue alternating turns this way until the last Honor token is taken from the pool. At the end of that turn, compare your Honor total to the Honor earned by Samael. If you have more Honor, you win!

Credits

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Ascension Tactics is a standalone deckbuilding game with tactical tabletop combat.



- A brand new game from the creator of the Ascension Deckbuilding Game and the World of Warcraft™ Miniatures Game.
- Enjoy multiple game modes including campaign, cooperative, and Player vs Player.
- Choose from dozens of champions and scenarios along with hundreds of cards to ensure endless replayability.
- Contents include: 334 Cards, 65 Battlefield Tiles, 45 Champion Standees, 24 Treasure Tokens, 17 Game Tokens, 40 Honor Tokens, Honor Token Bag, Gameboard and Scenario Book.
- For 1-4 players ages 10+; 45-90 minutes playing time

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- Universal App on iOS & Android!
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