

The idea behind the game

It is the beginning of the 17th century, and Armand Jean du Plessis – better known as Cardinal Richelieu – and Queen Maria of Medici are fighting bitterly for supremacy in France. Both want to gain influence over as many parts of the country as possible to reinforce their political position.

The players take on the roles of the two protagonists, trying to outdo each other at every opportunity. But no sooner does one of them have the backing of the majority of a region, than the other manages to achieve the same ...

Materials

- ◆ 48 playing cards (in 9 different colours)
 - ◆ 6 square property markers (3 per player)
 - ◆ 14 round discs (9 “shields”, 3 “symbols”, 2 “property markers back”)
- Pencil and paper for keeping score.*

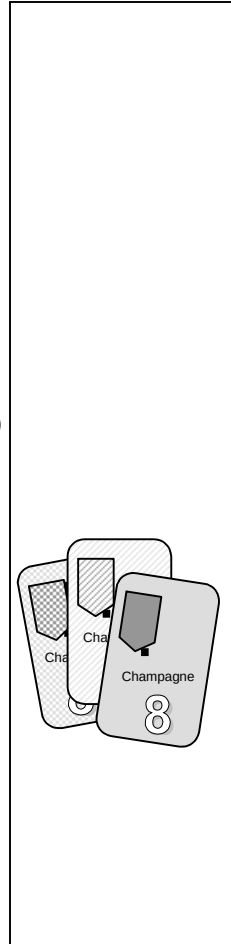
The playing cards

represent nine different regions of France. Each region is shown by a different colour and has a different shield. Most of the cards have at least a second shield or a symbol representing the individual region's military (sword), clerical (cross) or political (tower) power. The number on the cards states how many shields there are in this colour. Each of the three symbols occurs nine times.

The aim of the game

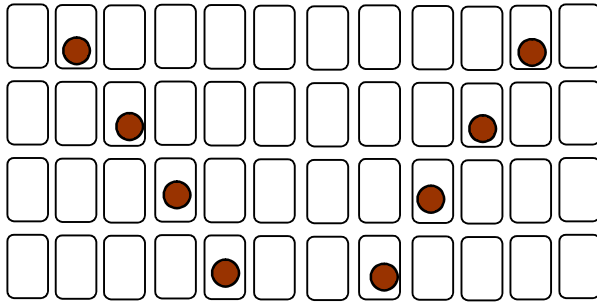
The two opponents try throughout the game to acquire most of the shields or symbols, as they score points for each one and these points help them to victory.

The winner is the player with the most power points at the end of the game.



Preparation

Shuffle the **48 playing cards** *well*, and then lay them face upwards, one after the other, in four rows of 12 cards, between the two players.



Shuffle the **14 discs** (round), then place **8 discs** *face down* on certain cards (as illustrated above). The remaining 6 discs are not needed in this round; put them back in the box *without looking at them*.

The **6 property markers** (square) are divided between the players. One player assumes the role of Richelieu and takes the 3 cardinal's hats, the other is the queen and takes the 3 crowns.

Playing the game

The younger player goes first, and the game then continues with the players in turn. The player whose turn it is *must* take at least one card and *may* take a maximum of two from the set in the middle of the table, and places it face up on the table. Please note:

- ♦ You may only take the cards on the left and right *ends* of the four rows.
- ♦ If you take two cards they must be in the *same* colour, and there may not be more than two *shields* on them. At this point, you do not need to pay any attention to the three symbols (sword, cross and tower).

(A detailed example on page **XX** shows the various moves than can be played in a move.)

Lay out 4 rows of 12 cards

Shuffle the discs, then place 8 face down on the cards

Each player gets 3 property markers

The cards may only be taken from the outside

A maximum of two of the *same* shields with each move

Note: The first player may only take *one* card when moving for the very first time, regardless of the number of shields on the card.

Order the cards by colour and place them on top of each other with the shields and symbols clearly recognisable.

Property markers

Once a player has taken one or two cards, he may place *one* of his property markers on *any* one of the playing cards in the set on the table. This may also be a card that has a disc on it, but it may not be one that already has a property marker on it, either this player's or the opponent's.



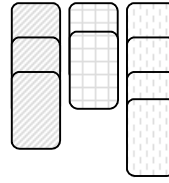
If a player has no property markers left, he may move a marker from one card to another one if he wants to.

By placing a property marker on a card, the player makes it more difficult for his opponent to take the card as this would now “cost” him a marker of his own. So if a player takes a card that has one of the opponent's property markers on it, this player must then hand over one of his markers, either by taking it from his stock or from a card and putting it back in the box.

The marker on the card taken by the player is returned to the opponent for his further use.

Note: If a player has “used up” all three of his property markers – i.e. put them back in the box – he may not take any more cards that have one of the opponent's markers on them. In fact, it could be that he is unable to take any more cards at all. In this case, this player stops playing until he is able to take at least one card.

The player is free to choose whether to take a card with no markers or with one of the opponent's markers on it. If he takes a card with one of his own markers, he takes the marker back to use later.



Place a maximum of 1 property marker per move

Taking a card with one of the opponent's property markers “costs” you one of your own

Example: Richelieu takes a card with one of the queen's markers on it, so he has to hand over one of his own. Because his markers are currently all on the cards, he must take a marker from a card. The queen gets her marker back.

Discs

If a player takes a card with a disc on it, he may look at it and then put it *face down* in front of him.

- ♦ The discs with shields or symbols are turned over at the end of the game. They then count as 1 shield or symbol (see *score*).
- ♦ The two “Property marker back” discs may be used *during* the game. A player who gives up one of these discs (by putting it back in the box) is given back one of the property markers he has already “used” (takes it out of the box) for further use. These discs are not counted when doing the evaluation.

Score

The players continue playing until *all* of the cards have been taken from the middle of the table, and then the points are added up:

1.) Shields: Points are scored as shown on the table on the right, starting with Bourgogne, in turn. The players count how many shields (not *cards*!) they have for each region. If one of the players has the matching disc, this scores him 1 extra point. The player who has *more* shields than his opponent credits the number of *his* shields as power points. The other player gets *nothing* (see *example 1*). If both players have *the same number* of shields from a particular region, neither scores anything (see *example 2*).

Note: For *each* region for which a player has no *cards* at all (a matching disc won't help!), he deducts 5 power points from his total number (see *example 3*).

Example 1: Richelieu has 5 shields from Bourgogne and the matching disc. The queen has the other 5 shields from Bourgogne. Richelieu is credited 6 points; the queen gets nothing.

Example 2: Both players have 4 shields from Normandie; neither scores anything.

Example 3: The queen has all 7 shields from the Provence, Richelieu only has the matching disc. The queen is credited 7 points, Richelieu loses 5.



Shields



Symbols



Property
marker
back

1. Bourgogne
2. Bretagne
3. Champagne
4. Normandie
5. Languedoc
6. Provence
7. Anjou
8. Bourbon
9. Auvergne

Shields:
With a majority
1 power point
for each of the
player's own
shields for the
particular region

2.) Symbols: Then the three symbols are all counted separately – sword, cross and tower. A matching disc counts as one symbol. The player who has *more* of one symbol than the other player is credited his number of these symbols as power points. The other player gets nothing (see *example 4*).

If both players have *the same number* of symbols of one kind, neither scores anything (see *example 4*).

Note: In the – admittedly extremely unusual – event of a player having no *cards* at all of a particular symbol, he loses 5 power points.

Example 4: Richelieu has 5 crosses, and the queen has the remaining 4. The matching disc was not in the game. Richelieu is credited 5 points; the queen gets none.

(If the queen had had the disc, neither player would have scored anything.)

End of the game

The player with the most power points after the evaluation is the winner.

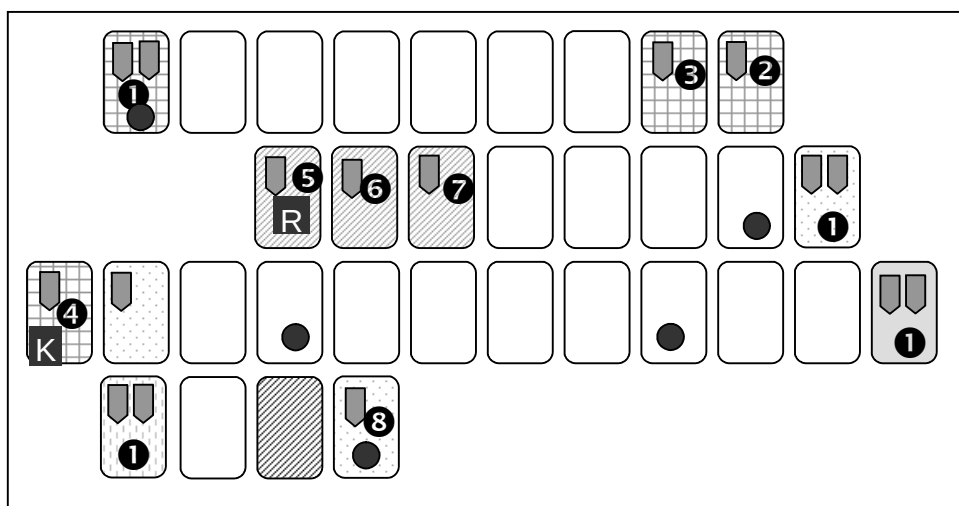
In the event of a draw, the player with the *lower* number of cards is the winner.

Variant

The game is more demanding when working out the score if three of the four rows of cards are completely removed.

**Symbols:
With a majority
1 power point
for each of the
player's own
symbols of the
particular symbol**

**The player with
the most power
points is the
winner**



It is Richelieu's move. He can take:

- ♦ One of the cards with two shields (1).
- ♦ Or the two checked cards (2) + (3) at the top right. Instead of the card (3) he could also take the checked card (4) in the 3rd row on the left. If he were to take this card he would have to hand over one of his property markers; the queen would get her property marker back.
- ♦ Or the two striped cards (5) + (6) in the 2nd row on the left (and his property marker on the card [5]). He would not be allowed to take the striped card (7) in this move because no more than 2 cards are allowed in a move.
- ♦ Or the spotted card (8) (and the disc) at the bottom on the right. He would not be allowed to take the spotted card (1) in the 2nd row on the right outside as well as this would then mean he had more than 2 shields.