

The Alchemists have spent their lives attempting to control the base materials of this universe, commanding them to transform into purer substances, substances that would allow the enlightened Alchemist to gain knowledge, wisdom, and possibly gobs of money.

Times, however, are tough in The Kingdom. Budget cuts have pared the Monarch's staff to the bone. The Royal Exchequer, enraged by a lack of results and bloated Laboratory budgets, has demanded that all but one of the current Alchemists leave the payroll. The challenge is made: all Alchemists must demonstrate their ability, and whomever brings the most Coin to the Royal Treasury continues as the Royal Alchemist. The others, like crude retorts, will be fired. The Alchemists' skills and wits will be challenged- even as they wrestle with Nature they must beware each other; to keep their job, the former colleagues must become - AlchEnemies.

For 2 - 4 Players.

Each set contains:

120 'Reagent' cards.

120 'Recipe' cards

Short Description of the Cards:

Reagents

There are five types of Reagents: the four Elements (Air, Earth, Fire, and Water) and the Alembic.

Recipes

There are three types of Recipe cards – Metals, Essences, and Formulas.

"Paraphernalia": Metals and Essences are considered Paraphernalia, materials the Alchemist makes. To "Transmute" a Paraphernalia Recipe card from her hand into a card in play, an Alchemist mixes all the Ingredients listed on the Recipe together in an Alembic. At the beginning of her next turn, the Ingredients are discarded and the Paraphernalia is ready to be used.

[Graphic of Paraphernalia card indicating:

Name – Just what it sounds like.

Type icon - Indicates whether the Recipe is a Metal or an Essence

Ingredients – A list of items that an Alchemist must have in order to play the card from her hand by performing a “Transmutation”.

Text – Card Text printed in black specifies what actions may be taken when playing the card. Text printed in purple provides flavor and can be ignored for gameplay.

Symbol – How card is represented in ingredients list.

Coin – Value in Coin]

"Formula" Recipes allow Alchemists to manipulate nature to enhance their position or hinder their opponents. Like Paraphernalia, Transmuting a Formula Recipe card from hand into play requires mixing all listed Ingredients in an Alembic. Unlike Paraphernalia, the Formula has an effect as soon as all the ingredients are mixed in the Alembic. The Formula Recipe is discarded with the rest of the Ingredients at the beginning of the Alchemist's next turn.

[Graphic of Paraphernalia card indicating:

Name – Just what it sounds like.

Type icon - Indicates the Recipe is a Formula

Ingredients – A list of items that an Alchemist must have in order to play the card from her hand by performing a “Transmutation”.

Text – Card Text printed in black specifies what actions may be taken when playing the card. Text printed in purple provides flavor and can be ignored for gameplay.]

Setting up play

Each player, an Alchemist, receives a complete set of Reagents. This consists of one of each of the 'Elements' ('Air', 'Fire', 'Earth', and 'Water'), and an 'Alembic'. These are placed face up in front of the Alchemist; this space is her 'Lab'. Cards placed in the Lab are considered to be “in play”.

Shuffle the remaining Reagents and place them face down in the middle of the table. This is the Reagent Stack. On one side of this will be the Reagent Discard Pile, and on the other will be the Recipe Discard Pile.

Shuffle the Recipe cards. Deal out 30 Recipe cards to each player - this forms the player's Recipe Stack. If any Recipes are left, place them face up next to the Reagent Stack to start the Recipe Discard Pile. Each Alchemist then deals herself a hand of 5 cards from her Recipe Stack, and places the rest face down next to her Lab.

The Alchemist born closest to 4AM, December 10th plays first.

Order of Play

During her turn each Alchemist performs the following steps in order:

* Clean Up the Lab:

All Transmutations started the previous turn are now complete. Move Ingredients from Alembics to the proper Discard Piles. Discard any Formula Recipes used. Move new Paraphernalia cards from the Alembics into the Lab.

* Draw:

There are two draw steps. First, the Alchemist draws two cards from the Reagent Stack. Then the Alchemist draws two more cards in ONE of the following combinations:

- two cards from her Recipe Stack
- two cards from the Reagent stack, or
- one card from her Recipe Stack and one card from the Reagent stack, in any order

An Alchemist may look at the first card drawn prior to choosing what to draw as the second card. Reagent cards drawn are immediately placed in the Lab.

Note – Alchemists are not wizards, they do not live in huge castles in the middle of enchanted forests. They work in basement laboratories the size of card tables. There is only room for ten Reagent cards in any Lab. If a Lab contains ten Reagents, one Reagent card must be discarded immediately for each Reagent card added.

If there are no cards in the Reagent Stack, shuffle the Reagent Discard Pile and start a new stack.

* Play Recipe cards:

Alchemists make things and perform actions by Transmutation of ingredients cooked in an Alembic, a large pot in which the alchemical reaction takes place. Performing any sort of Transmutation requires an Alembic. Without at least one Alembic in the Lab, an Alchemist cannot play Recipe cards from her hand.

In order to play any Recipe card from her hand, the Alchemist must have all the necessary Paraphernalia listed as Ingredients on the Recipe in play in her Lab. A Formula Recipe can only be played if its action can be properly completed (for example, if a Formula destroys a Metal, then there must be a Metal in play).

To Transmute a Recipe - the Alchemist stacks the required Ingredients together and places them under the Recipe card. Ingredients may not be used to make more than one Recipe. An Alembic card from the Lab is placed on top of this stack, indicating the Recipe is being made. An Alembic can be used to make only one Recipe at a time. Cards under an Alembic are not considered to be “in play”. Recipes are played sequentially - all Ingredients must be placed in an Alembic and any Formula effects resolved prior to starting the next Recipe.

* Discard: There is only so much an Alchemist can keep track of. An Alchemist with more than seven cards in her hand must discard down to a hand of seven (7) cards at the end of her turn.

Play continues to the player's right.

Winning and End of Game:

The game ends when play reaches an Alchemist with an empty Recipe Stack. At this point, Alchemists add up the value in Coin of all Paraphernalia in their Labs - the Alchemist with the most Coin gets the job. Losers have to make their living selling 'food supplements'.