Turn Structure

- Overview
- 1. Draw
- 2. Interpret
- 3. Choose Action
- 4. Resolve Action
- 5. Update Community
- 6. Pass

Overview

Each turn follows this sequence. Don't skip steps; each serves a purpose.

1. Draw

The active player draws one card from the deck and places it face-up. This is the **Prompt Card**.

If the deck runs out: Reshuffle all non-milestone cards (2-10) and continue. Queens and Kings stay in the discard; they've already triggered their phase transitions.

2. Interpret

The table discusses what the prompt means for your settlement **right now**, given your current situation, challenges, and recent events.

The card provides the raw prompt through its suit and rank. The table brings it to life by grounding it in your settlement's specific circumstances.

Suit determines the domain:

- **Hearts** (♥): Community & Culture: bonds, traditions, celebrations, conflicts, memory
- **Diamonds** (♦): Resources & Technology: water, power, food, infrastructure, Earth-tech
- **Spades** (♠): Environment & Adaptation: wind, storms, native life, psychic abilities, Duskara's beauty and harshness
- **Clubs** (♣): Mysteries & Change: ancient structures, lost knowledge, transformation, the unknown

Rank determines intensity and type:

2-5: Everyday Realities, Normal challenges and opportunities

- 2: Minor obstacle or need requiring attention
- 3: Small opportunity or positive development
- 4: Modest challenge with clear stakes
- 5: Noticeable shift or emerging situation

6-9: Significant Developments, Substantial situations demanding decisions

- 6: Important opportunity that could improve things
- 7: Serious challenge testing the community
- 8: Major development requiring immediate action
- 9: Complex situation with competing interests

10: Critical Event, Urgent, high-stakes situations

- The settlement faces a crucial moment
- Multiple people or systems affected
- Success or failure will have lasting consequences

Face Cards (J, Q, K, A): Special Functions

Jack: Wild Card, Table chooses any suit interpretation

- Useful for addressing neglected areas
- Can combine elements from multiple suits
- Opportunity to spotlight overlooked aspects

Queen: Milestone (Growth Phase), See Phases section

King: Milestone (Crisis Phase), See Phases section

Ace: Character Emerges, See Characters section

The First Queen and King of each suit trigger phase transitions the first time they appear.

Example Interpretations:

3 of Spades (Environment & Adaptation, small opportunity): "A weather worker senses a pattern in the wind that could improve turbine efficiency for the next cycle."

7 of Hearts (Community & Culture, serious challenge): "Tensions between Earth Rememberers and Duskara-Born erupt during a cultural ceremony; both sides demand the settlement choose a direction."

10 of Diamonds (Resources & Technology, critical event): "The aquifer shows alarming signs of depletion. Emergency measures needed immediately or rationing becomes permanent."

Jack (Wild Card): "We haven't dealt with any mysteries lately. Let's make this about the strange lights some scouts reported seeing in the scorched lands."

3. Choose Action

After interpreting the prompt, the table discusses which of the four actions fits best. Sometimes it's obvious; sometimes there's debate. That discussion is valuable; it reveals what the community prioritizes.

The Four Actions:

CRADLE: Nurture resources, knowledge, culture, or infrastructure

- Plant crops, repair equipment, preserve traditions, teach skills
- Building for the future; sustainability over quick gains
- Proactive care and maintenance

WARD: Defend against immediate threats or dangers

- Fight storms, repel hazards, protect people, secure resources
- Reactive response to danger
- Prevention and protection

PROJECT: Undertake major initiatives requiring time and coordination

- Multi-phase endeavors: new infrastructure, expeditions, cultural reforms
- Can't be completed in one turn
- See Projects section for details

DELIBERATE: Discuss, decide, and set community direction

- Resolve open questions, make policy, address internal conflicts
- Pure social/philosophical work
- Changes community values or priorities

Choosing Guidelines:

The prompt suggests a natural action, but the table can choose differently based on community needs:

- If the prompt presents danger → often Ward
- If it offers opportunity for growth → often Cradle or Project
- If it creates internal tension → often Deliberate
- When in doubt, discuss what the community needs most right now

Example:

Prompt: 7 of Hearts - "*Tensions erupt during a ceremony; both factions demand the settlement choose a direction.*"

Possible responses:

- **Cradle:** Host a series of small gatherings to build understanding before the division worsens
- **Ward:** Intervene immediately to prevent the conflict from escalating to violence
- **Project:** Begin a formal cultural exchange program to bridge the divide
- **Deliberate:** Call a settlement-wide council to hash out core values and direction

Each approach is valid; the choice reflects the settlement's character and current priorities.

4. Resolve Action

Resolution uses a simple dice pool system:

Base Pool: Roll 1d6

Add dice for advantages (max 4d6 total):

- **Relevant character:** +1d6 if a character with applicable tags is involved
- **Relevant resource:** +1d6 if you have a resource that directly helps
- **Favorable conditions:** +1d6 if circumstances support the action
- **Cooperation:** +1d6 if multiple characters/groups work together

Success Threshold: 4+ on any die = success

Count successes (how many dice show 4+):

- **0 successes:** Failure with consequences
- **1 success:** Partial success with complications
- **2 successes:** Success with minor cost
- **3+ successes:** Overwhelming success

Psychic Ability Integration:

Characters with psychic tags grant +1d6 in relevant situations:

- **Thermal Sensor:** Detecting danger from temperature changes, navigating hot/cold extremes, finding heat sources
- **Weather Worker:** Predicting storms, calming winds, improving agricultural yields, protecting during superstorms
- **Bonded (specific creature):** Tasks involving that creature type, understanding native ecology, traveling terrain

These abilities emerged from Duskaran radiation and environmental pressures. They're natural tools for living well here, not supernatural powers.

Example Resolution:

Action: Cradle, Host gatherings to build understanding between factions Base: 1d6 +1d6: Mara, a respected Elder (Mediator tag) +1d6: Community Hall (relevant resource) +1d6: Recent shared triumph during storm (favorable conditions) Total: 4d6

Roll: 5, 4, 3, 2 = 2 successes Result: Success with minor cost. The gatherings build bridges, but some hardliners on both sides feel betrayed and withdraw from community life. Progress, but not perfect.

5. Update Community

Record the outcome:

- Modify your tracking (map, timeline, character web)
- Add/remove resources as appropriate
- Update Open Questions
- Note character development
- **Adjust Tension** (see Tension section)

This step is crucial. The game creates a living history through accumulated updates. Don't skip documentation.

6. Pass

The next player becomes active and draws a new card. Play continues clockwise (or any agreed order for async/solo play).