

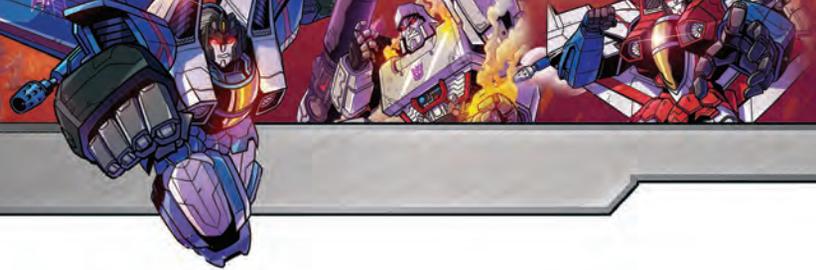
**TRANSFORMERS**



**A RISING DARKNESS**

**RULEBOOK**

# A RISING DARKNESS



## GET READY TO RISE UP!

*Transformers Deck-Building Game: A Rising Darkness* puts you in the role of the evil Decepticons in their plot to dominate Earth and its vulnerable human population. You'll procure dangerous Technology, hunt for powerful Relics, outmaneuver pesky Autobots, and thwart their futile attempts to derail your plans with their doomed Initiatives. Each player takes on the role of a Decepticon like Megatron or Starscream, each with their own unique abilities and strategic focus. How you leverage those advantages is entirely up to you. So power up with Energon, watch your back, and get ready to win by any means necessary!

### CONTENTS



Ages 14+



1-5 Players



45-90 Minutes



82 Main Deck Cards



6 Oversized Character Cards



50 Starter Cards



6 Autobot Boss Cards



36 Basic Cards



5 Reference Cards



10 Encounter Cards



42 Small Energon Cubes (1s)  
8 Large Energon Cubes (5s)



40 VP Tokens



15 Tracking Tokens



8 Reminder Tokens



6 Player Standees with bases



## OBJECTIVE

*Transformers Deck-Building Game: A Rising Darkness* has three exciting modes of play: Competitive, Cooperative (Co-op), and Team versus Team (TvT).

In **Competitive** mode, the Decepticons are looking to win no matter the cost, and are not above stepping over a few “friends” on the way to the top. You’ll earn Victory Points (VP) by defeating Adversaries on your own or with help, thwarting Autobot Initiatives, and acquiring Relics you discover as you navigate the Matrix. The game ends when all 3 Autobot Bosses have been defeated or if the main deck is empty when it’s time to put out a new card. The player with the most VP wins the game!

**Co-op** mode finds the players working together to defeat all the Adversaries and earn a group victory (or alone in Solo), while trying to avoid taking too much *Damage* and losing the game. There are no VPs in a Co-op game, only bragging rights for conquering Earth and taking down a sworn enemy.

**Team versus Team** mode requires that you also have the *Transformers Deck-Building Game* core set, allowing you to combine the two games in order to pit a team of Decepticons against a team of Autobots in an all-out battle for Earth. You can play 1v1 or 2v2, and you can decide how much of the two sets you want to combine.

Most of the rules below apply to whichever mode you choose to play, with additional rules for Co-op/Solo and TvT on pages 16-18.

## THE BASICS

Each player starts the game with a 10-card deck and seeks to improve it by gaining cards from a randomized layout of cards known as the Matrix. The Matrix starts out as a field of facedown cards for you to explore and find cards to buy or battle. Most cards you play grant some combination of **Power** you can use to gain new cards and defeat Adversaries, **Range** to use that Power at a distance, and **Move** to travel around and search the Matrix.

Your character is represented in the Matrix with a Decepticon standee. When you are on a space with a faceup card, you may

buy or battle that card if you have enough Power to do so. Choosing between improving your deck and battling Autobots for Victory Points will be an important decision throughout the game. Cards you buy typically go into your discard pile, whereas Adversaries you battle or Initiatives you thwart go into your “Vault,” a facedown pile next to your discard pile. Whenever you “gain VP,” you’ll take the specified number of VP tokens from the general supply and place them in your score pile. The cards in your Vault can give you more points at the end of the game. Your score pile is always public information, but the contents of your Vault are not. However, you may always ask a player to announce the number of cards in their Vault.

## ANATOMY OF A CHARACTER CARD

Each character card has two sides: Bot Mode and Alt Mode. You will Convert between these two modes a lot, so understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each side is important. “Alt Mode” is a catch-all term that describes all sorts of different vehicles and forms.



1. Character’s name.
2. Mode for this side of the character card.
3. Game text ability for this mode.
4. Two Energon abilities available when in Bot Mode.
5. Move value this character has when in Alt Mode.
6. Game text ability and/or limitation while in this mode.

### Terminology Update

The words “Transform” and “Transforming” are now known as “Convert” and “Converting,” with the same implied meaning (i.e. flipping your character card to another mode). If playing with cards from the *Transformers Deck-Building Game* core set that use the old terminology, assume those terms refer to this updated text.



## ANATOMY OF A MAIN DECK CARD

The main deck includes several different types of cards. Most cards have some or all of the following features:

- Name of the card.
- Cost of the card (pay this much Power to buy or defeat it).
- Power value of the card.
- Range of the card's Power and Block.
- Move value of the card.
- Card type. Laserbeak is a Robot, with the faction Decepticon and subtype Mini-Cassette.
- Game text ability.
- Energon ability.
- The reward a player receives if they successfully battle this card. However, Decepticons can't battle other Decepticons unless a card says otherwise, such as Spark Extractor or Starscream's Bot Mode.



of cards which will make up the Matrix and its dimensions:

1-2 Players: 3x4 (12 card Matrix)

3-4 Players: 4x4 (16 card Matrix)

5 Players: 4x5 (20 card Matrix)



1-2 Player Matrix

Create the Matrix by placing cards from the main deck **FACEDOWN** until they match the dimensions listed above. For example, in a 2-player game, make 3 rows of 4 cards each. This creates a Matrix of 12 facedown cards for players to explore.

- Once the initial Matrix has been created, use the remaining main deck cards to make 3 separate stacks, each with the same number of cards based on the number of players in the game:

1 Player - 7 cards each

2 Players - 9 cards each

3 Players - 11 cards each

4 Players - 13 cards each

5 Players - 15 cards each

- Then make a 4th stack with exactly 5 cards. Return all the remaining main deck cards to the box. They will not be used this game.
- Sort the 6 Autobot Boss cards into 3 piles by Level (I, II, III). Pile I contains only Level I Bosses, etc. Mix each of the 2-card piles a bit so the top card of each pile is unknown to the players.

The different card types include: **Ally**, **Basic**, **Autobot Initiative**, **Encounter**, **Maneuver**, **Relic**, **Site**, **Starter**, **Technology**, **Robot** (Autobot and Decepticon), and **Autobot Boss**. The bolded card types above are the cards that make up the main deck. Stack these cards in separate piles for the moment. Stack each of the other card types separately: Basic, Autobot Initiative, Autobot Boss, Encounter, and Starter. You will learn more about these as you progress through the rules.

## SETTING UP THE GAME

### THE MATRIX AND THE MAIN DECK

Before setting up the Matrix, you must decide if you are playing a Competitive, Co-op, or TvT game. There are a few extra steps for Co-op play indicated below, and TvT requires additional steps that are detailed on page 17, but all modes follow these general steps:

- Separate the main deck cards from the other cards. Randomly select 2 Autobot Initiatives and put them back in the box without looking at them, and put the other 5 into the main deck. Then shuffle the main deck of cards.
- The number of players in the game determines both the number



- Shuffle the top card from Boss pile 1 into Stack 1, the top card from Boss pile 2 into Stack 2, and the top card from Boss pile 3 into Stack 3. Place the remaining 3 Bosses back in the box without looking at them.

Stack Sizes for a 2-player game.



Add 1 Level I Boss to Stack 1  
Add 1 Level II Boss to Stack 2  
Add 1 Level III Boss to Stack 3

- Place Stack 3 on top of Stack 4, Stack 2 on top of that, and Stack 1 on top of the others. **Don't mix the stacks together!** Then, place the completed main deck next to the Matrix.
- On the other side of the Matrix, make a vertical row of 3 stacks: 16 faceup *Rise Up!* cards, 10 facedown Encounter cards, and 20 facedown *Damage* cards. Be sure to shuffle the Encounter and *Damage* stacks.

**PLAYER ONE:** The player who most recently watched or read anything Transformers goes first, or choose a player at random.

## YOUR PLAYER AREA

Each player does the following:

- Determine which Decepticon you will play this game. You can choose which character you wish to play or shuffle them behind your back or under the table and deal 1 to each player. Or, for more variety, shuffle and place 2 oversized character cards in the center of the table. In reverse player order (5 to 1), each player chooses 1 of the 2 characters, then adds a new one to the center of the table. In this way, each player will have 2 character options to choose from when it is their turn to choose.
- Place your character card in front of you **with the Alt Mode side up**. All players start in Alt Mode.
- Find your Decepticon standee and place it on your character card.

- All players start the game with 2 Energon. Take 2 small cubes from the general supply and place them near your character card.
- Each player takes 3 '-1 Move/+1 Power' tokens for marking cards during their turn.
- Take 6 *Wrath*, 1 *Firepower*, 1 *Hunt*, 1 *Fix*, and 1 *Reserves* to form your personal 10-card starting deck.
- Shuffle your deck and place it next to your character card, then draw 5 cards to form your starting hand of cards.



This image shows what a completed setup looks like for a 2-player game.

## Who are Adversaries?

*Autobots and Decepticons are adversaries to each other. As Decepticons, both Autobot Bosses and Robots are your adversaries, and you are considered an "Adversary player" when dealing with them or with their Encounters and Initiatives. Any reference to "Adversary player" in a competitive or co-op game refers to you and your Decepticon character. When playing Team versus Team, where both factions are players, keeping the Adversary relationship clear will be even more important.*



## TYPES OF CARDS

Every regular-sized card has a **card type** listed in the middle of the card, right under the art, with the exception of Encounters. Each card type has a unique color to further help distinguish them from other cards. This is an introduction to each card type. More specific rules can be found later in the rulebook.

**Ally:** These cards are humans susceptible to your manipulation or another form of allied support. When you buy an Ally, it immediately goes into play in front of you with an **Ongoing** or **Start of Turn** effect. Allies are not discarded at the end of your turn, but stay in play until an effect says otherwise. You may control any number of Allies, and they are all unique.

**Basic:** *Rise Up!* and *Damage* cards are Basic cards. *Rise Up!* cards are always available to be bought, no matter where you are in the Matrix. There are two varieties of *Damage* cards, neither of which can be bought; they are only gained via negative card effects. These cards are placed in stacks on the opposite side of the Matrix from the main deck. *Rise Up!* is faceup, while *Damage* is facedown.

**Autobot Boss:** The Bosses are seeded into the main deck after placing cards into the initial Matrix, so there will never be a Boss in the Matrix at the start of the game. Bosses have Reveal Attacks that affect all Adversary players when first revealed, and may have either **Ongoing** or **Start of Turn** effects that impact the active player until defeated. When you Confront and defeat a Boss, you gain the Victory Points (VP) listed at the bottom of the card and then place it facedown in your Vault. Bosses as a card type are **not** considered Robots for purposes of game text. However, they are considered Autobots. All Bosses are unique.

**Autobot Initiative:** These are plans the Autobots have put into motion to slow down your attempt at world domination. When you thwart one of these Initiatives, the card goes facedown into your Vault and you will earn the designated VP at the end of the game, unless the card says otherwise. These Initiatives are used in Competitive and Co-op games, but not TvT. All Autobot Initiatives are unique.

**Encounter:** Encounter cards are placed in a facedown stack on the opposite side of the Matrix from the main deck. You will draw a card from this deck when your Decepticon is Ambushed or when you are Confronting an Adversary. All Encounter cards are unique.

**Maneuver:** These cards are abilities and effects that can be “learned” and implemented by buying the card. Some are defensive, while others are potent offensive capabilities. There are 2 copies of each Maneuver card.

**Relic:** These are powerful cards you can discover and use to great effect. While most main deck cards cost between 2 and 5 Power to buy, these cards cost 7 or 8... but they are worth it! A Relic is typically worth 3 VP at the end of the game if you can get it into your Vault beforehand. You may choose to put a Relic into your Vault whenever it would otherwise be put into your discard pile, including immediately upon buying it. When the 3rd Boss appears, it could already be too late! All Relics are unique.

**Robots:** There are 2 factions of Robots—Autobots and Decepticons. When you battle and defeat an **Adversary**, you gain the Victory Points (VP) and other rewards listed at the bottom of the card and then place it facedown into your Vault. If they are not an Adversary, you may buy them instead, adding the card to your discard pile. No rewards are collected when buying. Game text that refers to Robots does not include Bosses, which are a different card type. However, they are considered Autobots or Decepticons. All Robots are unique.

**Site:** Sites are locations of importance that cannot be bought. Each one has some form of benefit to Decepticons in that space. Some have costs to use their game text, while others just give you a free benefit. Each may only be activated once per turn, even if a Site is flipped facedown and then flipped faceup again. All Sites are unique.

**Starter:** These cards make up your starting 10-card deck, but they are weaker than other cards. Use these cards to buy more powerful cards, then take advantage of opportunities to destroy these weaker cards to improve your hand.

**Technology:** These equipment and utility cards will aid you in your endeavors, but as tools, they typically don't grant you additional Move. Some Technology cards are volatile, with effects that may force you to destroy them after using the benefit they offer. There are 2 copies of each Technology card.

### BASIC AND ENCOUNTER CARDS IN DETAIL

***Rise Up!*** - You may purchase cards from this stack during your turn no matter where you are in the Matrix. They cost 2 Power to buy and you may buy as many as you wish, as long as you have the Power to



spend. The text “You may Convert” is an immediate optional effect that you pay no Energy to activate, as it is game text.

**Damage** - You can gain these cards from various hostile effects. When you gain a *Damage* card, draw the top card of the *Damage* stack, then determine which type you have: *Damage* or *Damage: Short Circuit*. Place standard *Damage* faceup near your character card, and place *Damage: Short Circuit* into your discard pile. Standard *Damage* cards force you to accept help from other players when playing in Competitive Mode, which allows them to profit from your battles against Adversaries with minimal effort on their part. *Damage: Short Circuit* causes you to lose Power during a battle (if you are the active player) and must be played before you can play any other card. When a card or effect mentions “Damage,” it includes both types of *Damage* you control.



At the end of a Competitive mode game, you lose 1 VP for every 2 *Damage* (either type) you own. Co-op and TvT have different ways of handling *Damage* which are detailed on page 17 and 18, respectively.

No matter which mode you are playing, you’ll want to fix your *Damage* as soon as possible! You “control” *Damage* cards if they are next to your character card or if they are played from your hand like other cards (see page 15). If you play a card that allows you to “destroy a card you control,” you may destroy one of these *Damage* cards. Destroying a *Damage* does not return it to the stack. Some card effects don’t destroy *Damage*, but instead return them to the stack, in which case you place them in a faceup discard pile next to the stack. If the *Damage* stack is empty, shuffle the discard pile and start a new stack. In the unlikely event there is no *Damage* in the stack or discard pile, you cannot gain *Damage*.

**Encounters** - Your Adversaries fight back using this facedown stack of cards.

When an Adversary in the Matrix is revealed, all Decepticons in that space (if any) are **Ambushed**. If a Decepticon moves onto a faceup Adversary (Boss or Robot), only that Decepticon is Ambushed. When 1 or more Decepticons are Ambushed, draw only 1 Encounter card and read the Ambush portion of the card. All affected Decepticons are subject to the same Ambush effect. When the Adversary revealed is a Boss, the “Reveal Attack” is resolved before an Ambush, and then the Ambush hits all Adversary players in the Matrix.



When a Decepticon Confronts an Autobot Boss, shuffle all the Encounter cards (including the discard pile), then draw 1 Encounter card and resolve the Boss Confrontation text. Only the active player is affected by the Boss Confrontation text. (See page 11 for more on Ambushes and Confrontations.)

## PLAYING THE GAME

The game is played in turns, starting with the first player and going clockwise. If there are any active “Start of Turn” effects, such as on Boss or Ally cards, resolve them before taking further actions. If you have multiple “Start of Turn” effects, you may resolve them in the order of your choosing.

At the start of your very first turn of the game, you will **Teleport** to any space in the Matrix (see page 16). Do not flip over the card you land on: You must use Move and/or card effects to flip cards in the Matrix faceup. During your turn, you can take actions with your character. If you battle an Adversary or confront a Boss, the other players may be able to assist you.

### TURN SEQUENCE

On your turn, you may do any of the following in any order and as many times as you wish (unless otherwise stated):

- **Play a card** from your hand to generate Power and Move. If the card has game text, resolve it immediately when played. You may spend the Power/Move later in the turn.
- **Move** your Decepticon into an adjacent space by spending 1 Move.
- **Search** your current space by spending 1 Move (flip the card under you faceup).



- **Buy or Battle** cards within Range of your Decepticon by spending Power equal to the card's cost.
- **Activate** Energon Abilities (each ability may be activated only once per turn).
- **Convert** by spending 1 Energon to flip your character card to the other side.
- **Confront** an Autobot Boss (once per turn).

## END OF TURN

When you are done taking actions, follow these steps to end your turn:

1. Announce that your turn is over. Any remaining Power and Move is lost.
2. Refill the Matrix:
  - If there are any empty spaces in the Matrix, add 1 card from the top of the main deck (facedown) into each of those empty spaces. Maintain the boundaries of the initial Matrix setup (3x4, etc).
  - However, if there are no empty spaces in the Matrix to refill, reveal the top card from the main deck.
    - If the revealed card is a Boss, the active player (the one whose turn is ending) must choose and destroy any card in the Matrix that is not a visible Adversary or Initiative. If they choose a facedown card, flip it faceup first: if it's an Adversary or Initiative, leave it faceup and destroy a different (non-Adversary/Initiative) card instead. If an Adversary is revealed in this way, all Decepticons in that space are Ambushed before choosing a new card to destroy. Place the newly-arriving Boss faceup in the now-empty space. Finally, resolve any Reveal Attacks and an Ambush as per the normal rules for Bosses (see page 11).
    - If the revealed card is not a Boss, destroy it.
3. If 3 Autobot Bosses have been defeated or the main deck is empty when a card needs to be added to the Matrix (or destroyed, if the Matrix is full), the game ends (see page 16 for end game scoring).
4. Discard all your cards in hand and any cards you played during your turn, except Ally cards or those with the **Ongoing** keyword, which remain in play next to your character card. Remove all '-1 Move' tokens from your character. Instead of discarding a Relic, you may store it in your Vault so that you will score the VP listed at the end of the game. Finally, draw a new hand of 5 cards.

## BASIC ACTIONS

These are actions you can perform as many times as you wish, without playing a card, as long as you can pay the cost. Except for Convert, these actions may only be performed during your turn.

Action	Cost	Effect
<b>Convert</b>	1 Energon	Flip your character from Bot Mode to Alt Mode or vice versa. <b>You may do this during any player's turn.</b>
<b>Move</b>	1 Move	Move your Decepticon 1 space orthogonally in the Matrix (up/down/left/right, not diagonally). If the Move you are spending is marked as "Flight," you may move diagonally for that Movement value only.
<b>Search</b>	1 Move	Flip a card in the same space as your Decepticon faceup.

## PLAYING CARDS

As you play cards from your hand into your playing area, you will collect Power and Move. You do not have to spend these right away: simply keep track of your total values.



Similarly, any Energon abilities can be used at any time during the current turn, unless they are designated as "Confront" or "Assist," which have special conditions governing their use (see page 10). **Each Energon ability may be activated only once each turn.**

However, if you play a card that has game text, resolve it **immediately** (for example, the "gain 1 Energon" effect on *Power Up*). Some game text and Energon abilities require certain conditions. For example, a card may have an Energon ability such as "**Confront: +2 Power.**" This text only applies when you activate it while confronting a Boss as the active player.

## SPENDING MOVE

You can use the Move value from cards you play and/or from your character's Alt Mode to roam from space to space in the Matrix. A "space" is an area of the Matrix that could hold a card, whether there is a card there or not. A Move value of 1 will allow your character to move from one space to an adjacent space. Normally, you can only move in the four cardinal directions: up, down, left, or right (not diagonally).



To show you have spent 1 Move, put a '-1 Move' on your character.



Ready, with 1 Move available.



Exhausted: This card's Move value has been spent.



When you spend the Move on a card you have played, it's helpful to rotate that card to show that you have used that Move. When using Move found on your character's Alt Mode, place "-1 Move" tokens on your character as you spend that Move instead of rotating it. If a card you play has 2 or more Move and you wish to spend less than the full amount all at once, you may also use '-1 Move' tokens to spend that Move one point at a time.

Once you spend Move in Alt Mode, that Move value does not reset if you Convert into Bot Mode and then back to Alt Mode within the same turn. Furthermore, any unspent Alt Mode Move value is unavailable while in Bot Mode. However, you can always Convert back to Alt Mode and continue using any unspent Move. You will remove any -1 Move tokens at the end of your turn.

**Flight:** A card with the Flight keyword allows you to use that specific card's Move value to move diagonally and/or orthogonally. Likewise, a character with Flight on their Alt Mode side can use their Alt Mode's Move value in the same manner. Flight from either source does **not** grant diagonal movement to other cards with Move you control, or Move from your Alt Mode.

**Searching:** You may also spend 1 Move to "Search:" Flip a facedown card in your Decepticon's space faceup. If you flip an Adversary, all Decepticons in that space are Ambushed by that Adversary: Draw an Encounter card and read the Ambush effect (not the Confrontation effect). All Ambush effects are Attacks, so Block abilities may allow you to avoid them (see Blocks on page 11). Some game text allows you to search adjacent spaces instead of your own space, such as on the Hunt card.

## SPENDING POWER

As you play cards, add up their Power. You may use this Power to buy non-Adversary cards and/or battle Adversary cards. Each time you buy or battle, reduce your current Power by the cost of those cards (shown in the hexagon on the upper left side of the card).

You may continue to buy and battle cards as long as you have Power to spend. If you don't have enough Power left, you cannot buy or battle a card. Cards you buy go into your discard pile, except for Allies. Game text that instructs you to "gain" a card does not use Power: The card is acquired at no cost to you (unless an effect says otherwise). Cards you gain go to your discard pile.

**Note:** If you play a card and then destroy it, you lose any unspent Power and Move from that card.

## USING RANGE

Typically, in order to buy or battle a card you must be in that card's space. However, if you have enough cards with both Power and Range, you can buy or battle a card within Range of your Decepticon without moving onto it. Range is the number of orthogonal spaces away from your Decepticon standee at which a card's Power (or Block) can be used. **Range only projects the Power (or Block) of that card**, not of other cards in play. Power NOT associated with playing a specific card has Range 0, as do cards without a printed Range value. Range is also useful for Blocking attacks against your fellow players—See page 11 for more on Blocks. Range is particularly useful when battling Adversaries: If you can avoid moving onto an Adversary's space, you can avoid being Ambushed before you battle them.

**Example:** If you play a single card with 2 Power and 1 Range, you can buy or battle a card with cost 2 from 1 space away (orthogonally) without needing to move onto it. If that card had cost 3, you would need another card with at least 1 Power *and* at least 1 Range to buy or battle that card. If game text uses the phrase "within range," the range is based on the Range value of the card in question.

## SPENDING ENERGEN

Energen is the fuel that Robots use to drive their most powerful abilities. In the game, Energen is represented by cubes. Any time you gain Energen, take a cube from the general supply and place it into your personal supply of Energen. Small Energen cubes are worth 1 Energen, while large Energen cubes are worth 5 Energen. Make change if needed. When you spend it, return the cube to the general supply. You may spend Energen for the following:



5 Energen 1 Energen

**Converting:** You may spend 1 Energen to Convert your character from its Bot Mode or Alt Mode to the other side. This may be done at any time, during any player's turn, for any reason or no reason at all. Exception: You **cannot** Convert while another effect is being resolved.



So, if you decide to be in Alt Mode when an Encounter card is drawn, you cannot Convert after seeing the effects of that Encounter card. However, you are free to Convert prior to drawing the Encounter card or after resolving it.

**Energon Abilities:** During your turn, you may activate Energon abilities on cards you have played and/or on your character card, if you can pay the Energon cost. If it is not your turn, you may only activate Energon abilities on cards you play to Assist other players. You cannot activate Energon abilities on your character card when Assisting. **Each Energon ability may be activated only once per turn.**

**Note:** You do not pay Energon to use game text (such as “You may Convert”) unless the card says otherwise.

## CONFRONT AND ASSIST ABILITIES

Some Energon abilities are preceded by the word “Confront” or “Assist.” Confront Energon abilities may only be activated by the active player during a Confrontation and Assist Energon abilities may only be activated when you are Assisting the active player during a battle against an Adversary. If game text uses the word “Confront” or “Assist,” but it’s not an Energon ability, then that text resolves immediately if you are currently Confronting or Assisting.

## EXAMPLE OF PLAY

Playing as *Thundercracker*, it’s your first turn of the game, and you are the third player to take a turn. You decide to Teleport your Decepticon onto a card at the bottom left corner of the Matrix. Since you are in Alt Mode, you now have 2 Move to spend from your character card, with the keyword **Flight** which allows your Alt Mode Move to be used diagonally. You place a ‘-1 Move’ token on your character card to move diagonally to another space, and then flip the card you were just on faceup as you leave (as that is *Thundercracker’s* Alt Mode ability).



The card you revealed is *Wingman*, a Maneuver. Perfect! *Thundercracker* wants Maneuvers, as they offer potential Power bonuses for that character.

You play 4 of your cards, which includes 3 *Wrath* and 1 *Reserves*. You hold back 1 *Hunt* because you’re not ready to activate its game text. As soon as you play *Reserves*, you gain 1 Energon, because you had 3 or fewer Energon at the time. The cards you played give you 3 Power, which is just enough to buy *Wingman*. Before moving back to buy that card, you decide to Search the space you are in first. You spend 1 Move from your Reserves, and turn the card under you faceup.

That card turns out to be *Hound*, an Autobot! You are immediately Ambushed. You draw an Encounter card and resolve only the Ambush portion of the card, which is **Attack: Gain 1 Damage**. You have no Blocks yet to prevent the attack, so you draw 1 card from the *Damage* stack. It’s a *Damage: Short Circuit*, so it goes into your discard pile instead of into play.

Unfortunately, *Hound* costs 4 to defeat, and you only have 3 Power, so you have to let *Hound* go for now. You spend your last Move from *Thundercracker* to return to the *Wingman* card (using **Flight** to move diagonally). You then decide to spend 1 Energon to Convert to Bot Mode, which will allow you to put *Wingman* on top of your deck instead of your discard pile when you buy it (your Bot Mode ability), since it has the **Flight** keyword. You spend the 3 Power from your *Wraths* and place *Wingman* on top of your deck.

Finally, you decide to play *Hunt* to flip an adjacent card faceup. This space happens to have *Shrapnel*, another Decepticon character, on it, and you are hoping to cause him to be Ambushed. Instead, you reveal an Autobot Initiative: *Robots in Disguise*. It has a Start of Turn effect that will flip all Robots in the Matrix facedown, including *Hound*.

But since *Hound* is adjacent to the Initiative, the initiative will be thwarted if he’s defeated. You may have given *Shrapnel* an easy VP gain if he’s able to defeat *Hound* on his next turn!

You announce that your turn is over. Next you place the top card of the main deck into the empty space in the Matrix. You place the remaining cards you control into your discard pile and then draw a new hand of 5 cards. Lastly, you remove both ‘-1 Move’ tokens from your character.



## DEALING WITH ADVERSARIES

As a Decepticon, Autobots are your Adversaries and to them you are an “Adversary player.” One of the primary ways to gain VP is battling Autobots (both Robots and Bosses). Doing so comes with a degree of risk, from gaining *Damage* to having a valuable card destroyed just when you thought you were certain to win the fight.

### ENCOUNTER CARDS

When an Encounter is drawn, only resolve the text for the type of encounter that is occurring, then discard the card faceup next to the stack. These cards remain in the discard pile until the deck is empty or a player is about to resolve a Confrontation. When either of these happen, reshuffle all 10 Encounter cards before drawing one to resolve a pending Encounter. All Ambushes are Attacks. Not all Confrontation effects are Attacks.

### AMBUSH

When an Adversary Robot is revealed in a space where one or more Decepticons are present, draw an Encounter card and resolve the Ambush text at the top of the card. An Ambush revealed in this manner is an Attack against all Decepticons in that space. If you flip an Adversary faceup and no Decepticons occupy that space, no Ambush occurs. If you move your Decepticon (or another player’s Decepticon) onto an Adversary (Robot or Boss) that is already faceup, only the moving Decepticon is Ambushed, not any Decepticons already there. You can safely remain on a faceup Adversary without incurring additional ambushes.

### BOSS AMBUSH AND REVEAL ATTACK

When revealing a Boss, instead of resolving an Ambush, first resolve the Boss’s “Reveal Attack” against each Adversary player in the Matrix (regardless of their location). The Boss card may also tell you to “then resolve an Ambush,” in which case you also draw an Encounter card and resolve the Ambush text against each Adversary player in the Matrix. **Note:** Blocking a Reveal Attack does not prevent the subsequent Ambush draw, as they are two separate events.

### CONFRONTATION

This text on an Encounter card is only used when a player Confronts an Adversary. To battle a Boss, you must Confront them. Some Confrontation effects on Encounter cards are Attacks, but most are not and cannot be avoided with a Block. Confrontation Attacks can be very destructive, so if you are worried about them, it might be worthwhile to hold back a card with a Block in your hand. Once you

have announced a Confrontation, you cannot play any additional cards, but you can discard Blocks to avoid Attacks, as that is not “playing” a card.

### ATTACKS AND BLOCKS

An Attack is indicated by the word “**Attack:**” followed by an effect. Attacks can be avoided by discarding a card with the **Block** keyword from your hand or activating a Block ability on your character card. When a player is Attacked, any player may Block that Attack if they are in Range of the character being Attacked. **Each player may only use one Block per Attack, and each discarded Block only prevents the Attack effect on a single player: One Block protects one player.** Each Attacked player who fails to Block the Attack will be affected by it.

Some Block text is followed by a colon (:) and text. That text resolves when you discard the card to Block, but no other text on the card is active at that time. Discarding a Block to avoid an Attack is not “playing” the card. If you play a card with a Block effect during your own turn, the Block text does not resolve.

Block cards use the same Range as the Power on the card, meaning that the Range value on the left side of the card is also the Range of the Block. If a player has a Block with no Range, the Range is effectively 0 (as with any other card), so they may only Block for themselves or another character in their space. Some cards have Energon abilities that Block. These Blocking Energon abilities are special in that the card is not discarded.

If a player does not Block an Attack they are facing, then each of the other players in clockwise order has the opportunity to use a Block to aid that player if: (1) they have a Block card that has enough Range to reach the character under attack, and (2) they did not previously Block the Attack for themselves or another player. Blocking an Attack is always optional.

### BATTLING ADVERSARIES

When you battle an Adversary, which includes Assisting, you are attempting to defeat that Adversary. This is similar to buying non-Adversary cards in that Power must be spent, but there are several differences. First, Adversaries you battle and defeat **do not go into your deck**. Instead, you gain the rewards listed at the bottom of the card then place the card into your Vault, facedown. Your fellow players will probably be interested in Assisting you during your battle in order to partake in the bounty... unless they prefer that you fail! Rules for Assisting are found on page 12.



When battling Adversary Robots, other players cannot Assist you unless you control standard *Damage*. Battling an Adversary Boss is called a Confrontation and you will likely need more Power than just the printed cost of the Boss to defeat it. Your fellow players will often try to Assist you when you Confront a Boss and may do so even if you don't have any *Damage*.

To battle, do the following in order (ignore Confrontation steps if you are not battling a Boss):

1. Move onto (or within Range of) an Adversary and play cards to generate Power. Resolve an Ambush if applicable. Activate any desired non-Confront Energon abilities. Declare your intent to battle along with your current Power total.
2. If you control standard *Damage*, your fellow players may each place one card facedown to Assist you\* in the hopes of earning the same VPs you will for far less effort. The card they place must be able to generate at least 1 Power and have enough Range to reach the Adversary's space. If no players Assist you, you may decline to battle and spend your Power elsewhere. If any players Assist you, you must continue the battle.

\***Confrontation:** Your fellow players may place Assists whether you control *Damage* or not.

**Confrontation:** Shuffle all 10 Encounter cards together, then draw the top card and resolve the Confrontation text. If a card you control is destroyed during this step, you lose any Power generated by that card.

3. Choose and resolve a number of Assists equal to the number of standard *Damage* cards you control (if any), even if this generates Power beyond what you need to defeat the Adversary.

**Confrontation:** If your Power total is not enough to defeat the Adversary, you must resolve Assist cards placed by the other players (if any), one at a time. Stop resolving additional Assists once your total Power meets or exceeds the cost of the Adversary, unless your *Damage* forces you to resolve more.

**Confrontation:** After resolving all available Assists, if you still need additional Power, you may activate unused Energon abilities, including ones with the keyword "Confront." Players

with Assist cards may optionally activate Energon abilities on the cards they have played.

4. If you have successfully defeated an Adversary, gain the rewards listed at the bottom of the card, then place the card into your Vault, facedown. Each player who resolved a legal Assist also gains the rewards, but only the active player puts the defeated Adversary into their Vault. If the battle is not successful, the Adversary remains in play and no one earns any reward.
5. **When you have concluded a battle, discard all non-Ongoing, non-Damage cards (and/or vault Relics) you have played so far during your turn.** All of the Power and Move you have generated up to that point in your turn is lost. All Assist cards are also discarded, whether they were resolved or not. **Note:** If this battle defeats the third and final Boss, the game ends **immediately before** discarding or vaulting cards.

**Confrontation:** Immediately end your turn.

6. If you have cards remaining in your hand, you may play them and continue your turn as usual.

## ASSISTING

Your fellow players will be looking for opportunities to Assist you in battling Adversaries (Assisting is also battling), as they want to earn the same rewards as you do while using far fewer cards than you are using. In Competitive games, you don't really want Assistance from the other players, as it is an easy way for them to earn VP using just a single card. In Co-op and TvT games, you want help from your faction teammates because your success is their success. As such, Assisting means different things in each game mode.

## ASSISTING IN COMPETITIVE GAMES

Here are some factors that will determine when players can or should Assist you:

1. **If you don't control standard *Damage*,** the other players cannot Assist you unless the battle is a Confrontation. Proceed with the battle and you will be the only player to earn the rewards.
2. **If you control standard *Damage*,** the other players may place Assist cards whether you need the help or not. You must



choose and resolve a number of Assist cards equal to the number of *Damage* you control (if possible).

If there are more Assists than the number of *Damage* you control, choose Assists one at a time until you have resolved the required number of Assists. When you have chosen a number of Assists equal to the number of standard *Damage* you control, stop choosing additional Assists unless you are still short of the Power needed to defeat the Adversary.

If any players want to Assist, each non-active player in clockwise order may place one card facedown in front of them in the hopes of Assisting the active player (and earning the reward at the bottom of the Adversary card). **Any non-*Damage* in hand can be used to Assist**, but it must be able to generate at least 1 Power (either on its own or by using an Energon ability it has) and have enough Range to reach the Adversary's space.

**Reminder:** Assisting in Alt Mode may be subject to a -1 Power penalty, depending on which character you are playing. Convert to avoid this.

**WHY ASSIST?** One reason to place an Assist card is because you believe the active player's Power total will not be enough to defeat a Boss without your help or without spending a lot of Energon. **Assists resolve before "Confront" Energon abilities can be used against a Boss**, so if the active player needs help, Assists are resolved first. Of course, if the active player's Power total is low compared to the cost of the Adversary, you could choose to not Assist and see if they can do it on their own. However, as offering an Assist is done in clockwise order from the active player, you have only one chance to choose to Assist or not. If everyone else does and you do not, you might miss out on some easy rewards.

The best reason to place an Assist is if the active player controls 1 or more standard *Damage* cards, which will force that player to accept Assists, even if they don't need the Power! This goes for Adversary Robots as well as Bosses.

If the active player is Confronting a Boss, there is a good chance they will need Assists even if they don't control any *Damage*. Many of the Confrontation effects on Encounter cards will increase the cost of the Adversary. For example, if a player boasts that they have 7 Power and have announced a Confrontation against a 6-cost Boss, it is quite likely that they will need Assistance as a Confrontation effect might increase the cost of that Boss by 3, 4, 5... or even more! This is an

opportune time to play an Assist. If they control *Damage*, they must resolve at least that many Assist cards (if able). Sometimes a player will control more *Damage* than there are Assists, which means that all Assists played will be resolved.

When you resolve your Assist, you fully resolve that card as if you played it during your own turn. However, you cannot spend any Move on a card played to Assist. As soon as you reveal your Assist card, resolve the game text, announce your Power total, and then (optionally) you may activate your card's Energon ability if you wish. You may wait until after the active player has used some or all of their Energon abilities before using your own. You are not required to activate Energon abilities on your Assist card, but doing so might be the difference between a successful battle and a failed one. An illegal Assist (the card has no Power or not enough Range) is discarded without being resolved.

As soon as the active player has reached the Power required to defeat the Adversary, they must stop accepting additional Assist cards unless they have more *Damage* cards than the number of Assists they have already accepted. **The active player chooses the order in which to resolve Assists**, and should pay attention to the current VP totals of their fellow players when deciding who to accept help from (in Competitive games). At the end of the battle, you must discard your Assist card whether it was resolved or not. You do not draw a card to replace the card you played, even if yours did not resolve.

## ASSISTING IN COOPERATIVE AND TEAM VS TEAM GAMES

In Co-op mode, you should frequently ask nearby teammates if they wish to Assist you. You want them to Assist you, as multiple players can each gain the reward text. VP you gain converts to Energon in Co-op games, and everyone needs Energon! See Cooperative/Solo Rules on pages 16-17.

In TvT mode, you want teammates to help so you can more easily defeat Adversaries. However, unlike Co-op, **only the Active player gains the reward**. See TvT Rules on page 17.

**In both Co-op and TvT, your teammates may Assist you in battling any Adversary Robot, whether the active player controls *Damage* or not:** You may always work together. Talk to your teammates and only play as much Power as you need to defeat the Adversary with their Assists, as after the battle you'll have to discard all of the non-Ongoing cards you played so far that turn.



## EXAMPLE OF COMPETITIVE PLAY - CONFRONTING A BOSS

It's your turn (playing *Thundercracker*) and *Bumblebee*, an Autobot Boss, is faceup in the Matrix. At the start of your turn, you must discard 1 card because of *Bumblebees'* Start of Turn effect. You choose to discard *Reserves*, as it has no Power and you have more than 3 Energon. You control one Ally: *The Machinations*, which will make it a little easier to defeat *Bumblebee*. But you also control 1 *Damage*. You play most of your remaining cards, but hold *Wingman* in hand since it has a Block effect, and you intend to confront *Bumblebee* and want to be prepared. You exhaust a *Rise Up!* to use its Move and move 1 space onto *Bumblebee*.

You must draw an Encounter card because you moved onto a faceup Adversary. *Shrapnel* is on *Bumblebee's* space as well, but he's not Ambushed because the Adversary was already faceup. The Ambush reads: "**Attack:** Lose 2 Energon." You have 4 Energon and can afford the loss, so you decide not to play your Block just yet. You're still ready in case the Confrontation has the Attack keyword!

You announce your Power total of 5, but *Bumblebee* only costs 4 to defeat because you have *The Machinations*. So far, so good. But since you have 1 *Damage*, the other two players know that you have to resolve at least one Assist. *Shrapnel* at Range 0 and then *Megatron* at Range 1 each place 1 card facedown as an Assist, hoping to join in on the reward.

You shuffle all 10 Encounter cards together and draw a card to resolve the Confrontation text. It's *Evil Cannot Win*. The text reads: "**Attack:** Destroy 1 Maneuver you control. If you control none, gain 2 *Damage* instead." You have 1 Maneuver in play and don't want to lose it, so you happily Block the attack (thankfully you held it back). With no further increase in the cost of the Boss, you have enough Power to defeat *Bumblebee* on your own! Sadly, your 1 *Damage* forces you to choose another player's Assist, even though you don't need their help. You choose *Shrapnel*, who flips his card faceup and resolves it, because *Megatron* is currently the points leader.

You and *Shrapnel* each gain 3 VP and you place the defeated card in your Vault. *Megatron* is out of luck on VP, and he and *Shrapnel* must discard their Assists. Having Adversaries like *Bumblebee* in your Vault will score you some additional VP at the end of the game, so you aren't too worried that your opponent also earned the VP. Now that the Confrontation has concluded, your turn is over.

## OTHER CARD TYPES IN DETAIL

### AUTOBOT INITIATIVES

Autobot Initiatives are cards that cannot be bought, as they are "heroic" acts of resistance from those so-called defenders of humanity. Initiatives affect all players. Place an Ongoing or Start of Turn token on an Initiative once it is faceup, depending on what sort of text the card has, as a reminder. Initiatives are going to make conquering Earth a little more difficult for the Decepticons, but they can be "thwarted" with some effort.



Some Initiative cards require a Decepticon to be on the space to thwart it. If it does not say you need to be on the card's space to thwart it, you can thwart it from any space in the Matrix. However, to "contribute" something to an Initiative requires the Decepticon to be on that card: While your Decepticon is on the Initiative during your turn, take the required resource (typically a card) of the appropriate type/cost from your hand and place it under the Initiative. You cannot contribute cards that do not advance the thwarting of the Initiative. For example, since *Running on Empty* requires you to contribute 4 cards with cost 3+, you could not contribute a card with a cost less than 3.

Autobot Initiatives are always thwarted by the active player during a single turn, unless the card specifies otherwise. When thwarted, place it facedown into your Vault or destroy it, as stated on the card. Some Initiatives allow you to gain VP during an attempt to thwart it, and others only provide end-game scoring (when you see Vault: 2 VP at end of game). Initiatives that ask for contributions may be "worked on" by multiple players over multiple turns until finally thwarted, but contributions are still made by the active player during their own turn.

### RELICS

These powerful cards can be bought, used, and then stored in your Vault. If you fail to vault it before the game ends, you won't score the VP listed at the bottom. Some Relics must be destroyed to gain VP, or to prevent the loss of VP.



Relics provide you a "press your luck" opportunity. They have powerful game text,



but if you keep one in your deck too long, you might not draw it and vault it before the game ends. A Relic outside your Vault at the end of the game is worth 0 VP.

## SITES

These are locations that feature abilities which you can use when your Character is in that space. Many Sites have an activated ability, where you may spend Move, Power, or Energon to generate an effect or reward. Just like with an Energon ability, you may only activate it once during your turn. If a Site has no activation payment to make, the ability just happens, if the conditions are right. If a Site is flipped facedown, then flipped back faceup, the Site's conditions are reset and you can activate this Site again as though it was just revealed.



## OVERSIZED CHARACTERS

Your character has abilities on both sides of the card. In Bot Mode, each character has text at the top of their text box that is “always on.” It could be a triggered effect that is looking for a game state (such as playing a particular card type) or a static effect that simply happens without any outside input. This text is active at all times while in this mode, unless it says “during your turn.”

Several characters have game text that gives Power bonuses. For example, *Megatron's* Bot Mode reads: “Each Decepticon you play during your turn has +1 Power.” This Power bonus applies to cards that you play while that ability is active. So if *Megatron* plays a Decepticon in Alt Mode (where that +1 Power ability is not active), then Converts to Bot Mode, the bonus is not retroactively applied. However, if *Megatron* plays a Decepticon while in Bot Mode, then Converts to Alt mode, the +1 Power carries over, since the effect was “triggered” when that ability was active.

When gaining Power bonuses on cards, you should place “+1 Power” tokens on them to make it easy to see which ones have the bonus. It's important to link Power bonuses to cards, as the Range of the card also applies to that bonus Power, and if an Encounter card or other effect destroys a card, the Power, Move, and all other effects go with it.

Bot Modes each have 2 different Energon abilities as well, with a payment cost of 1 and 2 Energon, respectively. As with any other

Energon ability, you may activate each of these abilities only once during each of your turns. You cannot activate them during another player's turn, unless the ability text says otherwise. Once activated, any Power bonus they give you (if any) remains available if you Convert to Alt Mode.

## MISCELLANEOUS RULES

### CONTROL vs OWN

Cards you play during your turn and cards that are in your play area on an Ongoing basis are all cards you “control.” You do not control cards in your hand, deck, or discard pile. You “own” all the cards you control, plus all of the cards in your hand, deck, and discard pile. Your character card is never included in any sort of card count.

### SHUFFLING YOUR DECK

Only shuffle your discard pile to become your new deck when you need to draw, reveal, or otherwise manipulate the top card of your deck and there are no cards in your deck. Do not shuffle your discard pile simply because there are no cards in your deck. Oftentimes, you will need to shuffle at the end of your turn to draw your 5 new cards: Draw until your deck is empty, then set aside your incomplete hand. Shuffle your discard pile, then continue drawing until you are full up at 5 cards. Your discard pile is public information.

### DESTROYING CARDS

Destroying cards is a great way to thin your deck down so that you will draw your best cards more often. Standard *Damage* cards are not placed into your deck, but they are cards you control, so if you have a card or ability that can “destroy a card you control,” you should certainly choose to destroy a *Damage*. As for cards in your deck, *Damage: Short Circuit* and the 10 Starter cards you begin the game with are also desirable cards to destroy. Destroying a card in your hand means you won't be playing that card. Destroying a non-*Damage* card you control (one you played or is Ongoing) is best done at the end of your turn after you have spent the Power and Move on that card.

When a main deck card is “destroyed,” it is placed into a faceup pile of cards next to the main deck. Other destroyed cards (Starter, *Damage*) should be placed into a destroyed pile away from the play area, or returned to the box.

**IMPORTANT:** If you play a card and then destroy it, you lose any unspent Power and Move on that card, as well as any unused game text effects. Be sure to buy/battle before destroying cards if you can help it. Likewise, if you are forced to destroy a card during



a Confrontation, you lose the Power (and any game text ability) that card provided, reducing your overall effectiveness during that battle.

## DISCARDING CARDS

When a card effect tells you to discard a card, this is from your hand as the default. If a card effect means for you to discard it from anywhere else, it will mention where in the text.

## TARGETED EFFECTS

Some cards use the word “target” to designate a recipient for an effect. A target can be a card, but it is typically a player, and that player can be you, if you so choose.

## FLIPPING CARDS FACEUP/PEEKING

Some hidden cards allow you to interact with them. When you “peek” at a card, only you get to look at it, unless it’s a Co-op game. Look at it and then return it to where it was, facedown. When you “flip” a card, such as when you perform a Search or play a *Hunt*, it is turned faceup for all to see, and remains faceup. A “Reveal Attack” on a Boss happens when that card is first flipped faceup for all players to see. This attack resolves against all Adversaries of that Boss.

## AVOIDING AMBUSHES

Some cards have game text or Energon abilities that allow you to “avoid” an Ambush drawn during your turn. This means that your character is not affected by the Ambush at all. If you are the only character affected by the Ambush, there is no need to draw an Encounter card. However, if other characters are affected by the Ambush, draw an Encounter and resolve the Ambush text from that Encounter, ignoring the effect for your own character only.

## TELEPORT

A card or ability with Teleport allows you to move to any space in the Matrix (unless otherwise stated). When you Teleport into a space with a faceup Adversary, you **do not** trigger an Ambush. Your Decepticon’s initial entry into the Matrix is a free Teleport that can’t be repeated without a card effect.

## VICTORY POINTS AND YOUR VAULT

When you defeat an Adversary, thwart an Initiative with a Vault reward, or choose to vault a Relic, add those cards to your Vault instead of your discard pile, where they remain until the end of the game. Your Vault is a card pile you create next to your discard pile. When you place a card into your Vault, adjust your VP accordingly:

1. Cards that read “Gain X VP” are gained immediately. Grab that many VP tokens. Make change if needed.
2. Cards that don’t use the word “Gain” don’t give you immediate VP tokens, but will at the end of the game. These cards typically say “Vault: X VP at end of game.”

## GAME END

The game ends immediately when 1 of the following happens:

1. All 3 Bosses have been defeated.
2. The main deck is empty when a card needs to be added to the Matrix (or destroyed, if the Matrix is full).

**Note:** If you play a Relic during the last turn of the game, you will not have a chance to discard/vault it as that happens too late during the End Phase procedure.

## END-GAME SCORING

Display your score pile of VP tokens. As you gain additional tokens during end-game scoring, grab VP tokens from the general supply and add them to your score pile.

- Add up the costs of all Robots and Bosses in your Vault. You earn 1 VP for every multiple of 5 you count. (e.g., One 5-cost and two 3-cost Adversaries = 11 total cost, which earns you 2 additional VP).
- Earn 1 VP for every 5 Energon you have, rounded down (e.g., 19 Energon = 3 VP).
- Add VP from your vaulted Relics and Initiatives.
- Remove 1 VP from your score pile for every 2 *Damage* you own (e.g., 3 *Damage* = Lose 1 ‘1 VP’ token). This includes *Damage: Short Circuit*.
- The player with the most VP is the winner!

## TIEBREAKERS

1. Most Bosses defeated
2. Most Energon
3. If still tied, enjoy your shared victory!

## COOPERATIVE / SOLO RULES

Co-op mode can be played by 1-5 players, working together to defeat all 3 Bosses before the main deck runs out or before any one player sustains too much damage. Solo games (1 player) use the exact same rules as Co-op games with more players, but there won’t be anyone to Assist you and you don’t have any teammates to Assist.



Most of the game rules for playing Competitive also apply to Co-op and Solo games, with the exceptions noted below. Be sure you have followed the setup procedure for this mode of play by removing the Relics.

1. **No Scorekeeping Needed:** Any reference to VP means Energon in Co-op. So “Gain 1 VP” reward means you “Gain 1 Energon” instead. Similarly, “Lose 1 VP” is “Lose 1 Energon.” Any rewards at the bottom of cards that refer to “Vault: X VP” (from an Autobot Initiative, for example) are ignored in Co-op games for purposes of VP, but put the card into your Vault anyway, as certain Confrontations may reference them. There are no end-game rewards for thwarting Initiatives other than making your team’s path to victory a little easier.
2. **You cannot Confront a Boss if there are any Adversary Robots faceup in the Matrix. You must deal with them first.**
3. When playing Co-op, players may Assist during all battles, regardless of *Damage*. Legal Assists always resolve and may be played faceup instead of facedown.
4. **How to Lose:** The game ends (and all players lose) if any single player controls 5 or more *Damage* at the same time (including *Short Circuit* cards), or when a card needs to be added to the Matrix (or destroyed from the top of the main deck) and there aren’t any there.
5. **How to Win:** Defeat all 3 Bosses before your team loses (see #4). You win or lose as a team.
6. **Expert Mode Co-op/Solo:** If you are a pro at Co-op games, or beat this game consistently, add this rule for a greater challenge: **VP does not convert to Energon.** So when you would gain or lose VP in Expert Mode, gain or lose nothing instead.

**Solo Note:** There are some Autobot Initiatives that are more difficult (or even impossible) to thwart in Solo mode, which is by design to increase the difficulty. There are also some abilities that simply do not apply, like those that target other players. Keep that in mind when choosing which character to play and which cards to buy.

## TEAM VERSUS TEAM RULES AND SETUP

TvT mode combines this game with the *Transformers Deck-Building Game* core set to offer players a chance to play on opposing teams: Autobots vs Decepticons. Players choose a faction and team up to battle the opposing faction, in a 1v1 or 2v2 contest. **Note:** You must have both games to play this mode. Many of the normal setup rules on pages 4-5 apply, so you will need to refer to those steps, but with the following modifications:

### Quick Setup

1. Choose one “base” game to play with, either the core set or this one. You will use all its tokens, Basic, Encounter, and main deck cards, except for Initiatives and Schemes. Remove those and return them to the box.
2. Bring over the character and Starter cards from the other game to this one. Leave the main deck cards behind, aside from Bosses.
3. Select 3 random Autobot Bosses and 3 random Decepticon Bosses (1 of each per level, 6 total). Follow normal setup rules for shuffling in Bosses, but add 2 per stack (1 of each faction).
4. Use both *Roll Out!* and *Rise Up!*. Put them in 2 separate stacks.
5. Teams must consist of an even number of players: 1v1, or 2v2. Players choose 1 character from their chosen faction, along with the 10 corresponding Starter cards: Autobot character and Starter cards come from the core game and Decepticon character and Starter cards come from this expansion.
6. Decepticon and Autobot players sit in alternating positions, so turns alternate between factions when going in clockwise order.

### Advanced Setup

For a more thematic experience, in addition to the Quick Setup above, do the following:

7. Add 1 full set of Maneuvers and Technology from each game (both core and this set) to the main deck. You should have only 1 of each card, with no duplicates (16 of each card type). Return the rest to the box.
8. Add 3 random Sites from each game to the main deck, as well as *Decepticon Defense Bunker*, for a total of 7 Sites. Return the rest to the box.
9. Add 3 random Allies from each set to the main deck. Return the rest to the box.
10. Use all Robots (12 Decepticons, 12 Autobots) from one game, or use 1 faction from one game and 1 faction from the



other. For example, use all 12 Decepticons from *Transformers Deck-Building Game* and all 12 Autobots from *A Rising Darkness*, or vice versa. You must use ALL 12 Robots for that faction from the chosen game, and return the set from the other game to the box.

11. Use all the *Damage* (including *Short Circuit*) cards from this set, putting them facedown; return the core game *Damage* to the box.
12. Use all Encounters from both games, but shuffle them together to form a single 20-card stack.

## New Rules for TvT

Most of the rules for a Competitive game apply here, with the following exceptions:

- Only the Active Player gains the reward when defeating an Adversary. Assisting players earn nothing.
- Adversary players can play “defensive” Assists to aid their faction’s Boss who is under attack (see more on Defensive Assists below).
- Similar to Co-op mode, your teammates can always Assist you regardless of *Damage*. Unlike Co-op mode, Assists are played facedown.
- Standard *Damage* doesn’t force Assists to resolve.
- Only Decepticon players may purchase *Rise Up!*, and only Autobot players may purchase *Roll Out!*
- If a single player ever controls 5+ *Damage* (including *Short Circuit*), the game ends and players calculate their combined team VP to determine the winning team. **If the player who controls 5+ *Damage* is the active player, then their team loses an additional 3 VP.**
- Otherwise, the game ends when 1 team defeats all 3 Adversary Bosses or the main deck runs out. In either case, the team with the most VP wins!

## Defensive Assists

During the Assist step of a Confrontation (not battling Robots), Adversary players within range may play a “defensive” Assist, facedown, to defend their Boss by adding their card’s Power to the cost of the Boss being battled by their opponents. Defensive Assists are placed facedown during the same step that offensive Assists are being placed, all in turn order, and activate game text when resolved, except they always resolve automatically after the Encounter’s Confrontation text is resolved (but BEFORE offensive Assists are resolved).

For example, if an Autobot player is confronting *Megatron* (a Decepticon Boss), a Decepticon player can place a *Firepower* facedown to Assist *Megatron*, if they are at Range 1 or closer (as *Firepower* has Range 1). After the Encounter’s Confrontation effect resolves, the *Firepower* card (with 2 Power) would increase *Megatron*’s cost from 10 to 12 before any Autobot players resolve their own Assists.

All defensive Assists are discarded in the same manner as offensive Assists, regardless of the battle’s outcome. Reduced Power when battling Adversaries in Alt Mode also applies to defensive Assists.

## TIPS FOR PLAYING

During your first few turns of the game, buying new cards to improve your deck is way more important than defeating Adversaries. Defeating Autobots doesn’t improve your deck, so if you spend too many early turns collecting VPs, you will be ill-suited to Confront Bosses when they appear, and they are worth far more VP. Whether you are playing a Competitive, Co-op, or TvT game, communication is key! During any game, there will be several opportunities to work together for mutual gain. You might think you don’t have the Power to defeat a Boss or not enough cards to thwart an Initiative, but with help... you just might! Keep in mind that table talk in Competitive games is non-binding, so be careful how much you rely on mere words.

When considering the order in which to resolve Assists, looking at players’ VP totals is a good idea, but also keep in mind how many cards are in their Vault. You never get to peek at an opponent’s Vault, but you may ask them how many cards are in their Vault. A player might be hiding a lot of points there, so consider that when choosing Assists.

When Bosses appear in the Matrix, it’s a good idea to end each of your turns near the Boss. That way, if anyone attempts to battle them, you might be able to Assist (or defend!). Conversely, if a player with a lot of points is on or near a Boss, find a way to move them away or battle Adversaries on the other side of the Matrix so they won’t be in range to Assist.

When playing Co-op or TvT, try to avoid flipping cards faceup in spaces where your teammates are present, so they won’t be Ambushed. Flipping too many cards faceup will also lead to uncovering more Autobot Initiatives, which can really hurt! But, late in the game you need to find the Bosses before time runs out.



## SPECIFIC CARD CLARIFICATIONS

### The Golden Rule

If a card's text contradicts these rules, the card takes precedence. Consider every rule in the game to also have the text "unless a card says otherwise."

**Autobots, Roll Out!** This Encounter card specifies that the Adversary cannot be battled this turn. This applies to all players, regardless of who was Ambushed or whose turn it is.

**Change of Plans:** When played, you may flip a card facedown, including Bosses, Initiatives, Sites, and Robots. When you flip a card facedown, you turn off any effect it had as though the card was not in the Matrix and remove any tokens or Energon from that card as well. If that card is flipped faceup again, its effect is reset as though the card was being revealed for the first time. For example, a Boss would resolve another Reveal Attack and the *Dre-13 Refinery* would regain all 9 of its Energon. If you flip an Initiative or Scheme facedown, you gain 1 *Damage* and any cards that were contributed to it are destroyed.

**Let's Even The Odds:** When active, this Initiative increases the cost to defeat Adversaries by the number of players (minimum of +1, maximum of +5). During any battle, if a player plays a legal Assist, they gain 1 VP whether or not the Assist is resolved. If all non-active players play an Assist during a single battle (essentially, everyone is in on the fight), the Initiative is thwarted. You don't gain this VP as the active player during a battle, but you will gain the Initiative card if it's thwarted, and that gains you 1 VP at the end of the game (along with the vaulted Adversary you took down). This Initiative cannot be thwarted in a Solo game.

**Mirror Response Mode:** When you play this Technology card, choose any other card in play (either one you control or one another player controls) and this card becomes an identical copy of the target card until your turn is over. It's useful to duplicate a powerful card in order to double its impact. However, card effects that trigger off of playing a certain type of card won't trigger off of this card, because it copies a card's effects AFTER it has already been played, not while it is in your hand. This card also reverts back to its original state during the End Phase. So, if you copy an Ally card, you do not get to leave it in play.

**This Time We Hit Back:** If any players Assisted in the battle, they are also Ambushed.

**To Punish and Enslave, Decepticons Attack!, Plasma Density Charges:** These cards allow you to attack other players directly, and may be Blocked in the same manner as any effect with an Attack keyword. If Blocked, there may be ramifications for using the card's Attack effect, as specified on the card.

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## TURN SEQUENCE

On your turn, you may do any of the following in any order and as many times as you wish (unless otherwise stated):

- Play a card
- Move
- Search
- Buy or Battle
- Activate Energon Abilities (once per turn/ability)
- Convert
- Confront (once per turn)



## END OF TURN

1. Announce that your turn is over.
2. Refill the Matrix:
  - If there are any empty spaces in the Matrix, add 1 card from the top of the main deck (facedown) into each of those empty spaces.
  - If there are no empty spaces in the Matrix to refill, see page 8.
3. Discard all your cards in hand and any cards you played during your turn, except for Allies and cards with the Ongoing keyword. Then draw a new hand of 5 cards. Remove any -1 Move/+1 Power tokens.

## BATTLING AN ADVERSARY (ignore Confrontation steps if this is not a Boss)

1. Move onto (or within Range of) an Adversary and then resolve an Ambush if applicable. Play cards to generate Power, activate any desired non-Confront abilities, then declare your intent to battle along with your current Power total.
2. If you control *Damage*, your fellow players may each place one card facedown to Assist you\*. If no players Assist you, you may decline to battle and spend your Power elsewhere. If any players Assist you, you must continue the battle.

\***Confrontation:** Your fellow players may place Assists whether you control *Damage* or not.

**Confrontation:** Shuffle all 10 Encounter cards together, then draw the top card and resolve the Confrontation text.

3. Choose and resolve a number of Assists equal to the number of *Damage* cards you control (if any).

**Confrontation:** If your Power total is not enough to defeat the Adversary, you must resolve Assist cards placed by the other players (if any), one at a time. Stop resolving additional Assists once your total Power meets or exceeds the cost of the Adversary, unless your *Damage* forces you to resolve more.

**Confrontation:** After resolving all available Assists, if you still need additional Power, you may activate unused Energon abilities, including ones with the keyword "Confront." Players with Assist cards may optionally activate Energon abilities on the cards they have played.

4. If you have successfully defeated an Adversary, gain the rewards listed at the bottom of the card, and then place the card into your Vault, facedown. Each player who resolved a legal Assist also gains the rewards.
5. When you have concluded a battle, discard all non-Ongoing cards (and/or vault Relics) you have played so far during your turn. All of the Power and Move you have generated up to that point in your turn is lost. All Assist cards are also discarded, whether they were resolved or not.

**Confrontation:** Immediately end your turn.

6. If you have cards remaining in your hand, you may play them and continue your turn as usual.

