

THE WARP

Strategy Guide



Introduction

Dear backers,

In this strategy guide I will share some personal insights and strategies concerning The Warp. I will talk about general tips, how to choose and prioritize missions and finally the options and benefits of each alien faction. I tried to keep all information in this strategy guide as basic and compressed as possible but I do recommend reading the rulebook before plunging in. A basic understanding of some base mechanics is required to fully understand all information.

Finally, I want to conclude that all the advice in this strategy guide is based upon my personal opinion. It was formed over more than 300 personal plays, playtests and demos, but should always be taken with a grain of salt. Because, as you will learn, game conditions vary strongly in each play. Due to loads of variable factors, there is no optimal or standard strategy to play The Warp. Adapting to the chosen private and new public missions, exiled alien abilities, the warp guardian and, not in the least, your adversaries, is key. I am also certain you will discover many more combinations and even better strategies and playstyles. I for one greatly look forward to hearing about them! I also want to point out that for any questions, feedback, ideas and/or remarks I'm always available through the Boardgamegeek page and the Facebook page.

Thank you for joining me in this 4-year journey, for your ongoing support and many of the great ideas and feedback that made this a better game. I cherish all the great moments we shared and I hope you can spend many amazing moments with your family and friends.

Thomas Snauwaert, designer of The Warp



Basic Tips

When playing The Warp, these are my 10 basic tips for all beginning players. I organized these tips by descending importance so when helping new players, prioritize the first tips.

1. Focus on the **Mission Cards**, and optionally the **Warp Guardian**. If I could only give you one tip, this would be the one. Gathering Mission Points will win you games so always keep an eye on the Mission point sources. What mission card types fit my playstyle this game? Which Open Missions are the other players focusing on? Which Missions can you complete in the long run or must be obtained fast?
2. Try to use the strengths and **abilities** of your **Alien Races** as much as possible. Since each Alien Race has multiple abilities, you can choose on which ones to focus. By utilizing their powers in optimal ways, they will grant you vital extra resources, cards, combat advantage or even Mission Points.
3. **Focus** on 1 or 2 Player Board **Track(s)**, not all Tracks. By progressing on a certain Track, you can obtain extra resources, troops or even a powerful track bonus early in the game. It's also important to note that only the first player to reach the end of a Tracks completes a Pioneering Mission.
4. **Optimize all turns**, not only your own turn. The **Follow** mechanic allows you to perform valuable actions during the turn of other players. It can be beneficial to save some resources to anticipate this. Performing actions others will follow during your turn can generate extra resources or cards.
5. **Balance your resources and cards**. Holding archive cards in hand grants you a lot of options (builds, upgrades and in combat), but discarding them can give you a boost in resources. Select what options you want to keep and make sure you have the resources to execute them.
6. **Expand in time**. Conquering and controlling more areas will grant you more options to build or to complete certain missions.
7. Use your **Reward cards** wisely. Saving for a powerful alien Reward ability might be worth it. Some Reward Abilities even unlock permanent bonuses.
8. **Trade** resources during your own turn. Building Trade Posts grants you more resources trades and even allows you to switching a private mission card.
9. **Manage your risk in combat**. As the attacker, you determine the risk you want to take in combat. High multiplier areas are riskier to conquer but offer an advantageous position in defense and attack. Attacking with sufficient troops, terrashifting areas beforehand and **Bribing opponents** can be a good way to assure your combat advantage and limit the risk of a loss.
10. **Keep an eye on the competition**. What open missions are they focusing on? Are they expanding in your direction? Where do they place their assault ships and laser cannons? Also watch what Tracks the opponents are advancing on to spot rivals for the end of track missions.

Missions



In this section I will give you a small introduction to the mission system in The Warp, followed by some advice on how to deal with missions before and during the game.

Let's start by going over the basics. There are 4 types of missions in The Warp:



- **Progress Missions:** missions focusing on track progression, number of performed builds, upgrades or the use of specific types of buildings.



- **Prosperity Missions:** missions focusing on controlling (or not controlling!) a certain number of resources, cards, troops or specific areas.



- **Conquest Missions:** missions focusing on controlling areas, winning (or losing) combat and performing certain feats during combat such as bribing.



- **Pioneering Missions:** missions focusing on reaching the end of a track or controlling a set number of areas first.

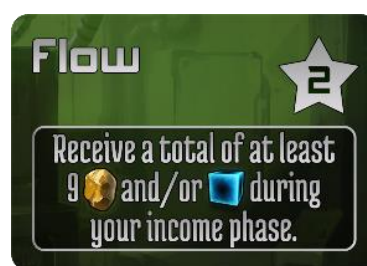
Progress, prosperity and conquest missions can feature both as:

- Open missions, available to all players and replaced by another mission when performed
- Private missions. Before the start of the game you will receive 2 progress, 2 prosperity and 2 conquest missions from which you'll choose any 3 to keep as your private missions. These are kept secret and can only be achieved by you.

Pioneering missions are always open missions that are never replenished.

So, how to pick your private missions at the start of the game and during the game? One first important factor are the two alien factions you drafted. If you want to play by the strengths of your factions, you should try to select missions that are compatible with their abilities and general playstyle. For more information on each alien faction and their possible playstyles, do check the individual alien overview further in this strategy guide. You can select small 1-point missions that do not correspond with this playstyle, since they require little effort, but I advise against choosing big missions that require a completely different preparation. For instance, if you pick two factions that produce or require a lot of resources, don't pick a mission that requires a large number of troops.

Secondly, check if any open and private missions are easy to combine. These combinations go way deeper than you would think at first glance and transcend mission types. It will require some experience to discover the links between all missions but you should get the hang of it after just 1 game. Let's illustrate these combinations with an example. The 3 missions below seem to have little in common but would actually make an excellent combination.



Flow requires you to receive a lot of resources during a single income phase so you will need to advance one of your resource tracks, for instance the energy track. By advancing the energy track you can gain a track bonus and achieve the Advanced mission. The energy track bonus allows you to reroll up to 2 dice in combat, and thus lets you complete the Lottery mission, and increases the discard value of your cards, making it even easier to perform the Flow mission. Finding these combinations will take some experience but 1-2 plays should already give you the necessary insight.

Since open missions are available to all players, you want to keep an eye on your opponents. What missions are they aiming for and for what missions will you have competition? Sometimes choosing a playstyle with less competition can be advantageous and grants you more time to complete missions in an efficient order. Keeping an estimate on the total mission points other players achieve can also be valuable.

Finally, do check out the Warp Guardian! But more on that in the Warp Guardian section.

So, a general summary:

1. Choose missions based upon your drafted alien factions
2. Look for combinations in any of the available (open and private) missions
3. During the game, keep an eye open for new small missions you can easily obtain without too much effort
4. Decide what missions are urgent based upon what other players are aiming for
5. Optionally, you can adjust to the warp guardian as they might grant bonus mission points for specific mission types (see next chapter: warp guardians).



Warp Guardians



Each game The Warp features an optional end boss, the warp guardian, situated in the middle of the board. During the drafting of player aliens, the warp guardian is always determined by the last player as the final non-chosen alien becomes the warp guardian. It's important to know each warp guardian varies in:

- number of combat dice and combat multiplier
- number of random abilities
- granted mission points.

This system creates a range of vastly different warp guardians with varying difficulty. Some warp guardians offer a medium challenge while others are high risk with more mission points. There are 3 ways in which you gain points by defeating the warp guardian. The first player to conquer the warp guardian gains the conquer points, some guardians grant mission point(s) for each turn you hold control over the warp gate and finally end points for the player who controls the warp gate at the end of the game. Defeating a warp guardian that grants points per turn early in the game requires risk but can be worthwhile. Some warp guardians grant points based upon the number of specific mission types you completed. The warp guardian can thus offer incentives to focus on certain mission types which could influence player's choices and playstyle. Below you can find the 6 general categories of warp guardians.

Zeto Archivists

MISSION POINTS: Conquer (1), Turn (1), End (1)

AREA COMBAT MULTIPLIER: 2 (dice), 5 (arrow)

DICE NUMBER: 2

ABILITY SLOTS: Ability 1, Ability 2, Ability 3

Xe'lo Traders

MISSION POINTS: Conquer (1), Turn (1), End (1)

AREA COMBAT MULTIPLIER: 5 (dice), 3 (arrow)

DICE NUMBER: 5

ABILITY SLOTS: Ability 1, Ability 2

Skolok Miners

MISSION POINTS: Conquer (1), Turn (1), End (1)

AREA COMBAT MULTIPLIER: 2 (dice), 5 (arrow)

DICE NUMBER: 2

ABILITY SLOTS: Ability 1, Ability 2

Morlar Raiders

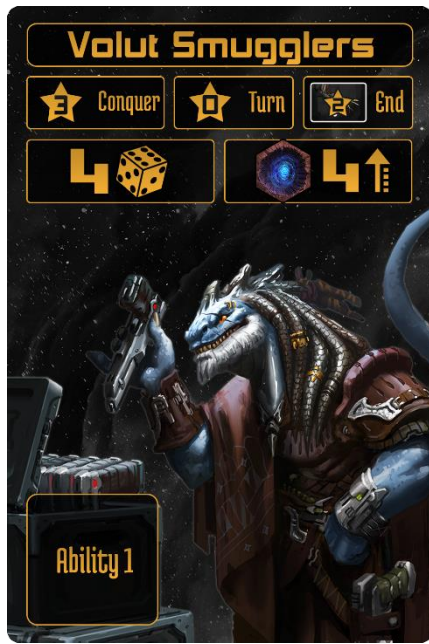
MISSION POINTS: Conquer (2), Turn (1), End (2)

AREA COMBAT MULTIPLIER: 3 (dice), 5 (arrow)

DICE NUMBER: 3

ABILITY SLOTS: Ability 1, Ability 1

Blue warp guardians grant points for completed progress mission, green for prosperity missions and red for conquest missions. For example, the Morlar Raiders grant you 2 points when conquered, a mission point for each 2 completed conquest missions and 2 points when controlled at the end of the game.



The warp guardians with the black background grant points based upon the number of completed pioneering missions. Purple warp guardians are quite special as they potentially give points based upon several types of completed missions. The orange warp guardian cards always offer a fixed number of points and are not linked to specific mission types.



Exiled Races



Another, smaller, factor that may influence your playstyle are the exiled aliens. Each game will feature 2 randomly determined exiled alien races. They occupy all areas not controlled by the players. Next to defending the areas, the exiled also offer some extra variability in each game as they each have a specific ability. Some exiled abilities have a global effect: certain bonuses, advantages or disadvantages for all players in the game. For example, when Nurec Designers are exiled, all upgrade costs are reduced by 1 energy. When the Xelo Traders are exiled, all bribes are rewarded with 1 gold for both involved players. As you can imagine, these abilities can slightly change games, making certain actions or situations more beneficial than usual. Other exiled abilities trigger when an attacking player conquers an area of the specific exiled aliens. These abilities mostly offer a 1-time effect or bonus to the successfully attacking player.

EXILED

Arok Undertakers

When a player \uparrow an down to \downarrow , they may add a \uparrow to their supply.

EXILED

Culpa Bookmakers

When attacked, players may bet \uparrow on either side. Double all won bets. All lost bets go to the active player.

EXILED

Caler Sentinels

grant a \uparrow +2 combat bonus.

EXILED

Darja Shadows

Whenever a player conquers an equal or higher \uparrow , they may gain \uparrow .

EXILED

Dura Scavengers

When conquered, the attacking player may \uparrow to gain \uparrow .

EXILED

Ecton Cultists

When conquered, the attacking player may sacrifice \uparrow to gain \uparrow .



EXILED

Fal Bounty Hunters

When conquered, the attacking player places the  token in their supply. At the end of the game, each  in supply grants .




EXILED

Gul Architects

When a player  or  during their own turn, they may .




EXILED

Luran Droids


When conquered and  or more were destroyed, the attacking player may take .




EXILED



Mortar Raiders

When conquered, the attacking player may place a  on an adjacent Mortar  and .

EXILED

Nera Seers

Each set consisting of a , a  and a  grants you a  at the end of the game.




EXILED

Nurec Designers

All  costs are reduced by .




EXILED

Orgu scientists

All  bonuses are activated on position 6.




EXILED

Ralan Engineers

When following, players may reduce  costs by .




EXILED

Silna Officials

All  costs are reduced by  on  containing or adjacent to a .





EXILED

Skolok Miners

Whenever a player \uparrow an \ominus containing \ominus , they may take \ominus .




EXILED

Sol'ca Mercenaries

\ominus in support of \ominus require no \ominus .




EXILED

Tavma Morphlings

When conquered, the attacking player may pay \ominus to add a \ominus to their supply.




EXILED

Vens Enforcers

When conquered, the attacking player may \ominus if they did not \ominus .




EXILED

Volut Smugglers

Whenever a player \ominus in support of \ominus , that player may \ominus .




EXILED

Xe'lo Traders

Whenever a bribe is successful, both involved players receive \ominus .




EXILED

Xotan Timebenders

When conquered, the attacking player may pay \ominus to perform a second, different action.




EXILED

Xurdun Slavers

Once during a player's own income phase, they may pay \ominus to add a \ominus to their supply.




EXILED

Zeto Archivists

When conquered, the attacking player may \ominus to \ominus .





Arook Undertakers

Active Ability

Whenever you terrashift an area down to combat multiplier 1, you may add a troop to your supply. There is no restriction as to whom controls the area, so this also applies when terrashifting an area controlled by exiled troops.

Reward Ability

At the cost of 2 reward cards, this reward ability permanently grants you a second action after performing a terrashift during your own turn.

Playstyle & Strategy

In short, the Arook Undertakers are about terrashifting. Terrashifting is a very powerful action that is often overlooked by many players. The active and reward abilities of the Arook turn terrashifting into the cornerstone of your playstyle. If used correctly, it should supply you with frequent troop and archive card income. By lowering the combat multipliers of surrounding areas, your conquering risks are lowered considerably. Do keep in mind however that low areas are hard to defend and are not ideal for launching new attacks. The use of assault ships and combat cards such as jetpack can be a great way to negate this disadvantage. Alternatively, targeting exiled areas at the other side of the board is also an option. The Arook can be teamed up with most factions but combinations with complimentary races such as the Skolok Miners, Morlar Raiders and Darja Shadows can be very beneficial.



Arook Undertakers

Excavation
Whenever you \uparrow an area down to \downarrow , you may add a \uparrow to your supply.

Reward Ability
When you \uparrow an area during your own turn, you may perform a second action.

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++



Caler Sentinels

Active Ability

The sentry tower combat bonus (+1 value on all your combat dice) applies not only on the situated area, but also on all adjacent areas you control. This ability stacks if multiple sentry towers are built on adjacent areas. If you moved no troops during the end phase, you may draw an archive card.

Reward Ability

The Caler Sentinels reward ability is a one-time trigger that let's you perform any build for free. It also permanently improves your sentry tower combat bonus to +2 value on all your combat dice.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Caler are a really atypical faction. They mainly boost the effect of a single building, the sentry tower. They however don't require a specific playstyle to fully utilize their powers. This is because the sentry tower is a cheap and versatile building. It has both an offensive and defensive use. Sentry towers not only protect your controlled areas from enemy assault ships and laser cannons, they also boost your combat power both attacking and defending. They can be paired up with an expansionist faction that benefits from the increased combat die values. The stackable combat bonuses can also be a huge combat power boost when attempting an attack on the warp guardian. Choosing a faction that aims for developing and performing progress missions is also a solid strategy. Playing defensively will allow you to move your troops around less and draw an extra archive card at the end of most turns.

Caler Sentinels

<p style="text-align: center; color: orange;">Duty</p> <p>the combat bonus applies on all adjacent areas.</p> <p>if no was performed during your end phase, you may .</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>any grant a combat bonus.</p>
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Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++



Culpa Bookmakers

Active Ability

At the start of any combat, all players in clockwise order, may bet 1 gold from their supply on either the attacking or the defending side. The easiest way to simultaneously bet is all betting players secretly placing a gold in their left hand, representing the attacker, or in their right hand, representing the defender. After all players decided every player reveals their bet. After combat is resolved, all players whose bet was correct may double their bet and place it in their supply. All lost bets are collected by you and placed in your supply. Remember that you can place a bet as well and you also recover your gold if you lose the bet.

Reward Ability

After this reward ability is triggered, you permanently gain the ability to reroll 1 combat die at any time during any combat.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Culpa Bookmakers are a fun and special faction as they offer a lot of interaction and decision making for all players in the game. Each combat players can place bets, both giving them the chance to gain or lose some gold. Basically, you want players to bet and lose as many times as possible, giving you a lot of gold revenue. This makes it interesting to trigger your reward ability as soon as possible, as rerolling an opponents' combat die can influence the outcome of battle. Pairing up with a faction that makes combat cards cheaper or gives you benefits when supporting exiled troops is also a good idea. Solca Mercenaries, Volut Smugglers and Luron Droids are great in this regard.

Culpa Bookmakers

Wagering

At the start of any combat, all players may bet on a side. All won bets are doubled. You may add all lost bets to your supply.

During any combat you may once of either one side.

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +++

Mastering Difficulty: +++



Darja Shadows

Active Ability

The Lurking ability of the Darja Shadows consists of 2 powers. Each time you are in combat with a higher or equal combat multiplier area, you will be able to roll an extra combat die. If you manage to conquer a higher multiplier area, you will receive 1 gold and 1 energy or 2 archive cards.

Reward Ability

The Darja reward ability is a permanent power-up that allows you to roll another extra combat die when in combat with an equal or higher combat multiplier area.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Darja Shadows are an alien race for more experienced players. They offer a combat focused playstyle and by using the Lurking ability, you can pursue a high risk, high reward strategy. This approach can provide you the means to fuel your aggressive strategy without advanced track progression. So, to support this playstyle, you can instead prioritize buildings that grant you advantageous circumstances in combat such as sentry towers, laser cannons and assault ships. Especially assault ships grant you a lot more opportunities to attack areas with an equal or higher combat multiplier. This high-risk strategy makes the Darja highly suitable to deal with Warp guardians with a higher combat area multiplier. The Darja are best combined with another combat orientated alien race to embrace an opportunistic or expansive playstyle. They can however also be combined with other alien races, especially if they prioritize mission cards that grant mission point bonuses on the warp guardian.

Darja Shadows

Lurking

+1 die when in combat with an equal or higher \uparrow .

When you conquer a higher \uparrow , take 1 gold or +2.

An extra +1 die when in combat with an equal or higher \uparrow .

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +++

Mastering Difficulty: +++



Dura Scavengers

Active Ability

The Salvage ability of the Dura Scavengers grants you 1 extra gold and 1 energy when you discard 3 archive cards during the Consult phase. To make full use of this ability you will want to save up archive cards, preferably with a high discard value, to then generate a big influx of resources. With this ability the Dura grant you a way of receiving a high resource income without big investments in the energy or gold tracks.

Reward Ability

At the cost of 2 Reward Cards, the Dura Reward Ability lets you take any 3 Archive Cards from the Discard Pile. Ideally, you want to wait for a considerably built-up discard pile to have a nice range of choice.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Dura are a very flexible race that can be combined with all alien factions. This makes them an accessible choice for both novice and expert players. The salvage ability opens up different strategies. A first strategy is to combine the Dura with any alien race that increases card draw, such as the Xe'lo Traders, Morlar Raiders and Zeto Archivists. This allows you to trigger this effect more often and achieve several Prosperity missions in the process. The alternative form of income also makes the Dura a great partner for combat orientated/expansionist alien factions. Being less dependent on extract income allows you to focus on troop income, expanding your territories and achieving conquest and pioneering missions. In this case you will need to find a balance between drawing cards you actually need and cards with a higher discard value. Lastly, the reward ability can be extremely handy to find 2 powerful combination combat cards to take on the warp guardian.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +

Mastering Difficulty: +++



Ecton Cultists

Active Ability

The Ecton Cultists are all about sacrifice. Their Ritual ability allows you to sacrifice one of your troops to receive 1 gold and 2 energy. During combat your maximum combat die value is also increased to 7. This makes reaching higher combat power easier, given you play the right combat cards.

Reward Ability

By spending 2 reward cards and discarding 2 archive cards, the Ecton can perform any 2 builds of your choice. This grants you enormous flexibility to build whatever you need at the moment, for instance 2 gold mines to advance your gold track, sentry towers to boost your combat power or a laser cannon to deter an opponent.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Ecton can be played in various ways but the most straightforward way is a combat-oriented playstyle. In this playstyle you mainly focus on the Command track to increase your troop income. This allows you to sacrifice a troop each turn to gain resources. This way you'll avoid the low-income rate that very aggressive playstyles can encounter, especially late game. The higher maximum combat die value also makes the Ecton a great faction to boost with combat cards or track bonuses and take on the Warp Guardian. You can also opt to pair the Ecton with a more euro orientated faction and mainly focus on the Reward ability. Using this you can advance fast on one or more tracks, unlock track bonuses and even aim for multiple end of track pioneering missions.

Ecton Cultists

Ritual
Once during your turn, you may sacrifice 1 to gain 1 gold and 2 energy.
Your maximum combat die value is 7.

Reward
Any 2

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++

Fal Bounty Hunters



Active Ability

At the start of the game, choose either the green exiled troops or the yellow exiled troops. When you conquer an area controlled by the chosen exiled troops, place the exiled troops token on the Fal Bounty Hunters and you may draw an archive card.

Reward Ability

At the end of the game, gain a mission point for each exiled troop token placed on the Fal Bounty Hunters. Note that these mission points are gained at the end of the game and do not influence the trigger of the final endgame rounds.

Playstyle & Strategy

Playing the Fal Bounty Hunters will hand you an important dilemma in the choice of playstyle. Either you try to occasionally conquer some areas from the chosen exiled troops, benefiting from some additional archive cards draw and potential extra mission points. The advantage of this playstyle is you can team up with any faction, play according to their strengths, perform any mission types, advance your preferred track(s) and conquer the areas you really need. Or, you fully commit and try to conquer as many areas from the chosen exiled troops to finally triggering the reward ability. This playstyle can greatly limit your choices and can require risks and sacrifices, such as conquering low areas near the territory of other players. At a mission point for each conquered area, it can however be very rewarding. In this case you want to combine the Fal with a combat orientated faction that boosts your combat power or mitigates combat risks.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++

Gul Architects



Active Ability

When you build or upgrade during your own turn, you may draw an archive card.

Reward Ability

Perform any build. Then you may draw 1 archive card for each build type you control. Given you start out with 4 different builds on your colony and there are 7 different build options, you will draw a minimum of 4 archive cards up to 7 archive cards.

Playstyle & Strategy

As you can imagine, the Gul Architects are all about developing and achieving progress missions. Basically, you will utilize the develop action in your own turn as often as possible to draw extra archive cards and recover resources from following players. This makes the Gul Architects an accessible and straightforward faction for new players. Mastering this alien race will however take experience and a set of key principles. To keep building you will have to time your attack actions, expanding your number of controlled areas. You will need to find ways of protecting your areas against more aggressive and expansion driven players. Buildings such as assault ships, laser cannons and sentry towers can help to address these problems and they boost your reward ability in the process. In order to gain sufficient resources, you might want to keep track of your opponents' actions and estimated resource supply to maximize your number of action followers. The Gul are best combined with other develop orientated faction such as the Nurec Designers, Xe'lo Traders or Ralan Engineers. Factions that are in need of archive cards to trigger abilities are also a good matchup.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +

Mastering Difficulty: ++

Luron Droids



Active Ability

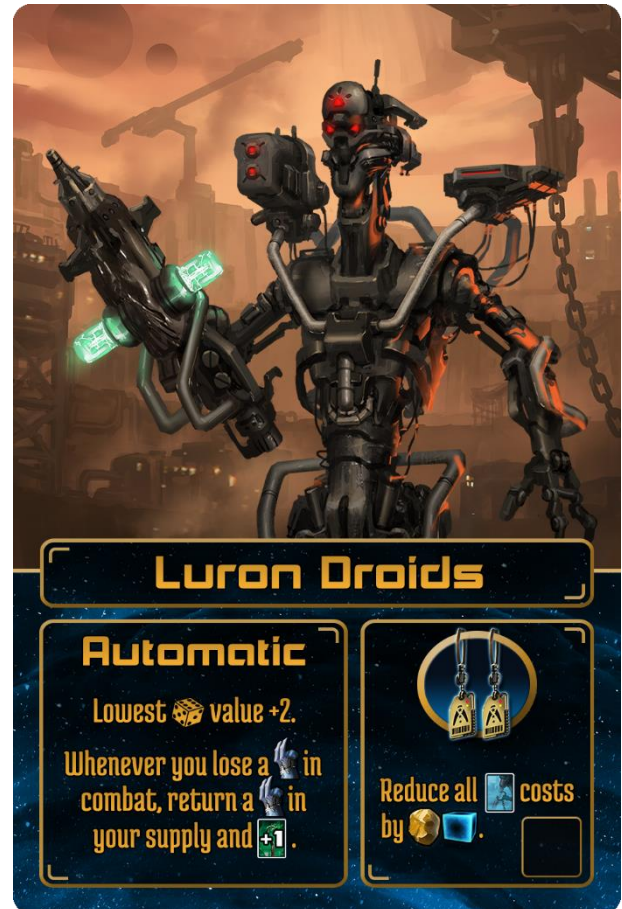
The Luron offer you a +2 on your lowest value combat die. This is a very solid boost to your combat power in each battle. The Automatic ability also lets you return all your destroyed troops to your supply and draw an archive card for each returned troop.

Reward Ability

By activating this reward ability, the resource costs of all your played combat cards are permanently reduced by 1 gold and 1 energy. At a cost of only 2 reward cards, this reward ability can be triggered quite early in the game.

Playstyle & Strategy

Most of the time, the Luron are played for an expansionist playstyle with frequent combat. Their active ability makes combat less of a risk since you get a boost in combat power and you recover any of your defeated troops in your supply. They pair up very well with other alien factions that benefit from conquering areas such as the Darja Shadows, Volut Smugglers and Xurdun Slavers. It is also possible to pair up the Luron with a more development orientated faction and pursue a more diverse playstyle mission wise. The reward ability also makes the Luron an excellent choice for an assault on the Warp Guardian. Normally playing 2 combat cards and selecting the best effects force you to save up a considerable amount of resources. Also note that with the reward ability supporting exiled troops in combat becomes a lot cheaper and might be worthwhile.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +

Mastering Difficulty: ++

Morlar Raiders



Active Ability

The key word with the Morlar Raiders is mobility. The active ability offers you the possibility to move up to 3 troops during your end phase, making it possible to shifting your full offensive power in a single turn. The Morlar also benefit from the use of assault ships, granting an archive card after each successful attack.

Reward Ability

By performing the cheap Morlar reward ability, you can first choose between building or upgrading an assault ship. Then you receive a troop for each assault ship under your control.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Morlar Raiders, as their name implies, are meant to be played aggressively. Basically, you want to control one or even multiple assault ships as soon as possible, either by building them or by using the reward ability. This will reveal more exiled areas, granting you loads of attacking options all over the board, more archive cards and a higher troop income. By upgrading your assault ships, you will increase your attacking combat power significantly. The use of assault ships grants a lot of mobility, making it easier to conquer an area controlled by another player. It will however require you to plan your attack and probably retreat fast. Low multiplier areas are often easily conquered but also hard to defend. The last thing you want is another player gaining control over your assault ship. With the right preparations this playstyle is also great for taking on the warp guardian. Especially if controlling the warp gate provides mission points each turn, going in early might be worth the risk.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: +++



Nera Seers

Active Ability

The Resourceful ability reduces all your upgrade. When you draw mission cards, for instance when replenishing, or reward cards, you may draw 2 cards instead. Choose 1 to keep and place 1 on the bottom of the involved deck.

Reward Ability

This reward ability permanently allows you to hold up to 4 private missions instead of 3. The restriction of holding up to 2 missions of the same type remains.

Playstyle & Strategy

This alien faction does not actually benefit from any specific playstyle and it can be paired with any other alien faction in the game. The main advantage is that it offers you more choice when drawing mission and reward cards. This does make it possible to more easily find combinations in your private missions. It is thus a very mission orientated faction, which can really help you in achieving a higher mission total. If you struggle focusing on missions during the game, I can wholeheartedly recommend playing the Nera Seers. Being able to place a mission card on the bottom of the deck also gives you a bit of control over what other missions won't be able to draw. The reward ability further adds to your choice and options. However, do keep in mind that at a cost of 3 reward cards you will most likely trigger this ability in the mid- to endgame. Given the choice you will have when drawing reward cards, it's also more likely you will spend them for their direct reward card effects.

Nera Seers

Foresight
When you draw or a , draw 2 instead and place 1 on the bottom of that deck.

You may hold up to 4 private (max 2 per type)

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++



Nurec Designers

Active Ability

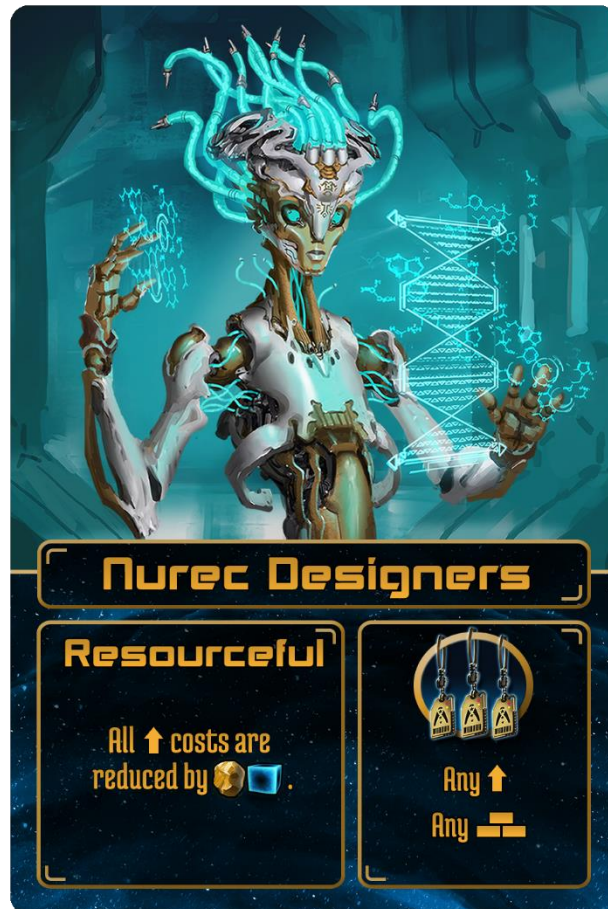
The Resourceful ability reduces all your upgrade costs by 1 gold and 1 energy. Upgrades are long term investments that increase the value or usefulness of each building of that type. They are however expensive so normally you use them scarcely. As the Nurec Designers heavily reduce this cost, this will allow you to perform more upgrades during any turn, keeping that track progression going at all times.

Reward Ability

At the cost of 3 Reward Cards, the Nurec Reward Ability lets you instantly perform any upgrade and any one build. This is a very powerful ability as it grants you a build and an upgrade without the need for any cards, actions or resources. It can be vital when competing with another player for an end of track bonus.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Nurec Designers are a very straightforward, easy and thus beginner friendly alien faction. The resourceful ability makes the Nurec an excellent choice when going for a more euro playstyle with a focus on progress and/or prosperity missions. This can be reinforced by pairing the Nurec up with develop orientated aliens such as Ralan Engineers, Skolok Miners and Xelo Traders. Such a pair up can even allow focusing on several tracks and pursuing multiple end of track pioneering missions. Because of their reward ability the Nurec Designers can also be paired with a more combat focused faction. A heavy combat-oriented playstyle can suffer from limited track progression and extraction income in the late game. The Nurec allow you to spend your reward cards to perform builds and upgrades without spending actions or resources.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +

Mastering Difficulty: +

Orgu Scientists



Active Ability

Your track bonuses are unlocked on position 6 instead of the usual position 8 of each track. This means you can unlock the powerful track bonuses earlier in the game. Whenever you perform a level 3 upgrade, you may draw 2 archive cards.

Reward Ability

This reward ability permanently removes all resources costs when building laser cannons, assault ships and sentry towers.

Playstyle & Strategy

Even if the Orgu can be combined with most factions, as the scientists, you mainly want to pursue progress missions and track progression. In contrast to other factions, you can even focus on advancing 2 different tracks from the start. The earlier unlocking of track bonuses, is a bigger difference than you would expect it to be. It only requires 2 upgrades and 1 build of one type to unlock a track bonus. This means you don't have to conquer any area before being able to achieve this, making you significantly faster than others. While doing so, the upgrades will provide you with some extra archive cards and you will build up a strong economy because of an increased extract income. When pairing up with a combat oriented alien faction you will most likely focus on triggering the reward ability as soon as possible. Building some laser cannons, assault ships and/or sentry towers, free of any resource costs, can then really help your expansion, future combat options and regional dominance towards other players.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: +++



Ralan Engineers

Active Ability

With the Efficiency ability, the Ralan allow you to play 2 develop cards instead of 1 when performing the develop action. Also, when following a develop action of another player, you may reduce your build costs by 1 energy. This ability makes developing, and especially performing builds, very fast and cheap.

Reward Ability

The Ralan reward ability permanently lowers all your laser cannon(s) activation costs by 1 energy. If you plan to build 1 or more laser cannons, this is a fantastic ability. It allows you, each turn, to make 1 free shot from all your laser cannons or take double shots at the cost of 1 energy each.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Ralan abilities mainly focus on 1 big advantage: the possibility to play more develop cards in your own turn and build cheaper in other turns. This allows you to perform more builds and upgrades and progress tracks faster than other players if played right. This will however require considerable and frequent resource income and sufficient archive card draws. So, with the Ralan you will most likely focus on the tracks that increase your resource income, such as the Energy and Gold tracks. Choosing a faction that grants extra cards or resources is also a good idea. Even if focusing heavily on developing, you will need to expand your number of controlled areas or you will run out of areas to build on. In this case you can utilize laser cannons, which will increase in efficiency with the reward ability, to weaken or even fully clear areas from a distance. This way you can expand without having to spend your actions on attacks.



Ralan Engineers

Efficiency
During your turn you may  instead of .
When you follow, reduce  costs by .

Your  activation cost is reduced by .

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++

Silna Officials



Active Ability

After each successful attack, you may add a troop to the area from which the attack was made.

Reward Ability

By performing this expensive reward ability, you can steal half the number of either archive cards, gold or energy from all other opponents. In order to maximize the potential reaps of this ability, you will need to pay attention on what income players chose beforehand and how many archive cards they are holding. Needless to say, this power is also more worthwhile to use in higher player number games.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Silna are quite a one-dimensional alien faction, their main strength lies in providing troops. This makes the Silna fantastic to pair-up with an expansionist alien faction. By gaining a troop each time you conquer an area, you can keep attacking while being able to choose a resource income during your next extract phase. This also allows you to choose other tracks to advance than the often-popular command track for aggressive play. It is worth mentioning that Silna can also be combined with more economy focused factions. The number of troops you'll gain this way is lower, but any turn you can choose your high resource income over troops will help you in following actions and achieving missions. As mentioned the reward ability is a lot stronger in higher player number games but it can be a great way to achieve certain prosperity missions or just forcing opponents to keep their resources in supply low.

Silna Officials

Conscription
After a successful attack, you may add  to the  from which the attack originated.

Choose , , or . Confiscate half the supply of each opponent, rounded down.

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +

Mastering Difficulty: ++



Skolok Miners

Active Ability

Whenever you perform a terrashift, including when following, you gain all resources that 1 targeted area contains. As not all areas contain the same resources, you want to focus on areas containing both energy and gold when possible.

Reward Ability

The Skolok reward ability offers you the choice between building or upgrading a Gold Mine. Then, you gain a troop for each Gold Mine you control.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Skolok playstyle is quite simple as it focusses on 2 main points of interest. First of all, terrashifting is a great action for the Skolok as, next to the usual benefits, it will provide you with extra resources each time. In the short run terrashifting will provide you a stronger combat position and less risk when attacking. In the longer run it makes pursuing missions involving terrashifting, controlling areas with certain combat multiplayers and even reaching a high combat power easy and worthwhile. Secondly, the Skolok are all about gold mines. With the free build or upgrade, the reward ability will give you an edge in first securing the gold track mission, Infinite Riches. If you want to make full use of the troops this provides, you should also prioritize building over upgrading gold mines. These abilities make the Skolok pairable with strong economic factions and factions that provide extra actions such as the Xotan Timebenders. Due to the gained troops and the gold track bonus, more aggressive, expansionist factions are also a very viable option.

Skolok Miners

Reclamation
Whenever you \uparrow \pm \downarrow , gain all that 1 targeted contains.

/
Take equal to the number of you control.

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++



Sol'ca Mercenaries

Active Ability

The Contentious ability of the Sol'ca Mercenaries consists of 2 complementary powers. First of all, all combat cards you play require no energy whatsoever. Secondly, whenever an exiled race wins combat, you may take 1 gold. This makes the Sol'ca a power to be reckoned with in combat and supporting exiled races in combat becomes a lot less resource intensive.

Reward Ability

The Sol'ca Reward Ability is a one-time ability that lets you place 3 exiled -1 tokens on areas of your choice, thus weakening multiple future targets for conquest. At a cost of 3 reward cards, it's a serious investment but it also grants you a permanent powerup: whenever you win a combat, you'll gain an extra reward card. Needless to say, you want to activate this reward as soon as possible and winning a combat supporting exiled aliens, granting you 2 reward cards, can really help to achieve this.

Playstyle & Strategy

The active and reward abilities of the Sol'ca make them foremost suited for an aggressive and expansionist playstyle. They can be combined with a wide range of aliens to go all-in on conquest or aim for a more balanced or opportunistic mission approach. Their reduced combat card cost also makes the Sol'ca fantastic for taking on Warp guardians. With the Sol'ca, track progress is still useful but keep in mind you'll be in no need of energy to play combat cards. The Sol'ca's reward ability can allow you to fuel the powerful reward ability of your other alien faction.



Sol'ca Mercenaries

Contentious

do not require any .

Whenever an wins combat, take .

Place -1 -1 -1 .

Winning a combat grants you an extra .

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++



Tavma Morphlings



Active Ability

The Duplicate ability of the Tavma Morphlings lets you copy a build or upgrade played by another player. This is a powerful ability since it only costs 2 archive cards. Do keep in mind you can only copy the exact build or upgrade effect played by another player and that player may draw an archive card.

Reward Ability

At the cost of 2 Reward Cards, the Tavma Reward Ability lets you gain the active ability of any other player alien race in the game. This is a fantastic power if you manage to unlock it early in the game and it gives you tremendous flexibility on how you want to play the morphlings.

Playstyle & Strategy

In my opinion the Tavma are one of the harder alien factions to play but one that is very rewarding if you make the right choices during the game. The active ability makes the Tavma foremost a euro playstyle alien faction (building and upgrading). The duplicate ability is also great for obtaining end of track pioneering missions as it lets you copy builds or upgrade of a player going for the same track(s). The Tavma have a bigger chance to shine in higher player number games where you'll have more choice when using the active and/or reward ability. They can be paired up with pretty much each faction as the reward ability gives you ways to adapt your playstyle during the game, even to a more offensive approach. Any faction improving card draw works great for fueling the use of the duplicate ability. It's also important to note that the Tavma can be great in team mode when duplicating the builds/upgrades of a teammate, granting them a card draw in the process.

Tavma Morphlings

Duplicate
 2: Instead of following, copy any or card effect.
 The player whose card effect was copied: +1.

Place on any alien race. Gain it's active abilities until the end of the game.

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: +++



Vens Enforcers

Active Ability

The Focus ability of the Vens Enforcers is very powerful but is tied to a specific condition. When holding 3 or less archive cards in hand, the resource cost of all your archive cards is reduced by 1 gold and 1 energy and you gain a +2 value on all your combat dice.

Reward Ability

This reward ability provides you with a permanent ability to play archive cards directly from the open archive card lineup.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Vens Enforcers are a flexible and powerful faction but they require some experience to play to their full potential. This is due to their active ability that only applies when holding 3 or less archive cards. Holding that few cards means your choice will always be limited and it's harder to plan ahead. If you want to keep the ability effects going you will often need to discard cards before drawing new cards or end your turn on 2 hand cards. Triggering the reward ability as soon as possible can significantly increase your options. The importance of this is even bigger in higher player number games where you need card options during all player turns. The Vens can be combined with all alien factions as their ability reduces development costs, boosts your combat power and saves you up resources. The only alien factions I would personally not pair-up with the Vens are aliens that allow you to draw a ton of archive cards. It is also worth mentioning that their active ability is incredibly useful when taking on the warp guardian.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: +++

Mastering Difficulty: +++

Xelo Traders



Active Ability

The Connected ability of the Xe'lo Traders consists of 2 very diverse powers that apply during all player turns. The first power takes place during combat. Whenever a player gets successfully bribed, you may gain 1 gold. The second power lets you draw an archive card whenever a player builds a Trade Post. Its important to note these powers also triggers during your own turn so you'll gain resources/cards when bribing other players or building trade posts.

Reward Ability

The Xe'lo reward ability grants you the choice to build or upgrade a trade post. Then, it also grants you 2 gold for every 3 buildings you control at that moment.

Playstyle & Strategy

Overall, the Xe'lo Traders are a great faction if you prefer a euro playstyle with a lot of building and a strong economy. Their reward ability functions as a small engine builder with increasing gold revenue the more buildings you control. By building trade posts you'll increase this resource income, advance the trade track and draw some extra archive cards in the process. The Traders are best combined with other progress and prosperity orientated factions. Any alien race that utilizes or requires a lot of archive cards is also a good combination. An alternative strategy is choosing a combat orientated faction and focusing on the bribe mechanic. This can be combined with advancing the trade track as trade posts are cheap and don't require specific areas. Finally it's important to note that, as the active ability of the Xe'lo trigger during any player's action, they perform better in higher player number games.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++

Xotan Timebenders



Active Ability

By paying 2 energy during your action phase, you can perform a second action. This action has to be different from the first action and you gain no archive cards or resources if this action is being followed.

Reward Ability

With this reward ability all played archive cards and used alien abilities require no resource costs. This includes the control time active ability. Other costs, such as reward cards, still apply.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Xotan can be combined with all other alien factions and offer a wide variety of playstyles. There are however a couple of important basics that you will need to be aware of. The control time ability is powerful but it requires a lot of resources, energy in particular. You will need to find a steady income in able to frequently activate this ability and this usually takes up to midgame to achieve. Advancing on resource tracks, unlocking track bonuses, finding ways to discard many cards during the consult phase are possible roads to take. Pairing up with an alien faction that generates extra resources can also help in this matter. The reward ability is expensive at 3 reward cards, but works in great synergy with the control time ability. When activated the control time ability requires no resources so you can perform 2 different actions and all cards played also require no resources. This can be a fantastic way to take on the warp guardian as you can play 2 combat cards at their best effects without having to consider the cost.

Xotan Timebenders

Control time
Once during your action phase, you may pay  to perform a second, different action. You gain no  or  if this second action is followed.


During this turn, all your abilities and  require no  cost.

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: +++

Xurdun Slavers



Active Ability

The Xurdun Slavers grant you 1 gold for each defeated exiled troop when you conquer an area. This does not apply when defeating player troops.

Reward Ability

The Xurdun reward ability grants you 3 extra troops to be placed on your controlled areas or in your supply. Secondly, it also gives you a permanent combat effect: each time you are in combat with exiled troops, you may reroll 1 of their combat dice. This can thus lower your risk when engaging an exiled area with multiple troops.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Xurdun Slavers benefit from an aggressive and expansionist playstyle. The more exiled troops you defeat, the more resources in the form of gold you will gain. When using this strategy it is best to pair the Xurdun with a second combat oriented alien faction. Especially factions that grant advantages in combat, such as Sol'ca mercenaries, Darja Shadows and Luron Droids, are awesome in this regard. The learning curve of the Xurdun is managing the risk you want to take in combat. Areas with a high number of exiled troops will grant you more gold, but are more dangerous in terms of combat power and are more likely to get supported by opponents. In terms of tracks to progress on your player board there are many possibilities: advancing the trade track so you can trade all that gold for energy, the command track to ensure your troop income or the energy track for more energy income and die rerolls.



Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++



Zeto Archivists

Active Ability

The Zeto Archivists are all about archive cards. They increase your maximum hand size to 9 archive cards. During the consult phase, if you choose to draw all cards from the archive deck, you may draw an extra card from the archive deck. This ability thus allows you to draw more cards at the expense of having less control over what cards you receive.

Reward Ability

With the Zeto reward ability you can search for any 2 archive cards in the deck and place them in your hand. This ability effect is quite limited but can be valuable in certain situation, as being in dire need of certain develop cards or preparing an assault on the warp guardian.

Playstyle & Strategy

The Zeto are an easy to play faction and they combine well with pretty much all factions. They can function as a card draw engine when paired with a faction that benefits from a wide choice of hand cards or discard abilities. Examples here are the Ralan Engineers, Tavma Morphlings and the Dura Scavengers. When going for a more aggressive playstyle, the Zeto can help you generate more resources by discarding cards. The Zeto have no preferences in track progression and I advise you to make this decision based up the chosen second alien faction. Since they mainly grant advantages during the income phase, they are at peak performance in lower player number games. The learning curve of playing the Zeto lies in deciding when to skip taking 3 blind archive cards. Sometimes only drawing 2 useful open line-up cards is just more valuable. Another mistake can be hoarding too many cards in your hand. Loads of cards in hand means a wide choice but also a lot of resource potential not being used.



Zeto Archivists

Insight
During the Consult phase, when you **+2** from the deck, you may **+1**. Your maximum hand size is **9**.

Search the deck for any **2** and put them in your hand. Shuffle the deck.

Mission focus



Playstyle Difficulty: ++

Mastering Difficulty: ++