

THE MIDDLE AGES is a card game for 3-4 players set during the Middle Ages of Europe, with each player taking on the role of a rival ruler, focused on expanding their holdings and weathering the perils of unrest and plague.

Multi-use cards are used to acquire new cards, gain actions, and amass points. Cards also present negative effects that players must mitigate. At the end of the game, the player with the most points across their Structures, Wealth, and hand wins the game.

SET UP

Separate the 64 Social cards by card back (Plague, Revolt, and Betrayal). Shuffle together the 20 Betrayal cards and deal 4 to each player, face down, forming the players' hands. Place any remaining Betrayal cards face down in the middle of the play area, forming the discard.

Shuffle the 44 Revolt and Plague cards together and place them in a face up deck in the middle of the play area, next to the discard, forming the Deck.

Shuffle together the 4 Accord cards and give one to each player.* Each player places their Accord card Accord-side up in their play area. Give each player a Player Turn card. **After the first game, players are welcome to select their Accord cards, beginning with the player to the left of the starting player and continuing clockwise.*

Determine a starting player using a method all players agree on. The game begins with that player taking the first turn.

THE CARDS

The Middle Ages uses several types of cards:



SOCIAL CARDS

The Middle Ages revolves around playing and acquiring the Social cards. Aside from starting cards, Social cards begin the game in the face up Deck. Each Social card has four uses.

The top of each card features one of four Character Icons and Character Abilities. Social cards are added to the player's Coterie to acquire new cards. The Character Icon and Ability determines what happens when a card is added to a Coterie.

The middle of each card features one of four Structures. Each Structure features an Ability and end game scoring.

The bottom middle features 1-3 Wealth Icons which are worth points at the end of the game.

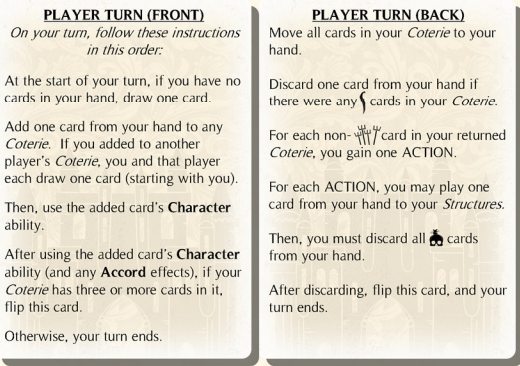
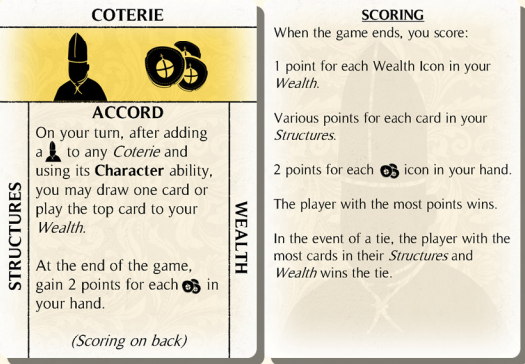
Finally, in the bottom corner of each card is one of three Crisis Icons. Each Crisis Icon presents a different penalty in a player's hand or Coterie.

PLAYER TURN CARDS

These double-sided cards drive the game play in The Middle Ages. The majority of the game's rules are contained on these cards.

Each player has one of these cards, and as the game is played, on their turn, they follow the instructions on their Player Turn card.

These cards dictate what the player can and must do on their turn.



ACCORD CARDS

These double-sided cards serve as player aids and set up the different areas of a player's play area.

Each Accord is unique, and corresponds to one of the four Character and Wealth Icons.

Additionally, on the back of each Accord card is a scoring reference.

PLAYING THE MIDDLE AGES

The Middle Ages is played over a series of player turns, beginning with the starting player and continuing clockwise. On a player's turn, they follow the instructions on their Player Turn card.

During a player's turn, if the deck is empty, the discard is shuffled to form a new deck. When the deck is emptied again, the game ends and each player scores points for the Accord Icons in their hand, Wealth Icons in their Wealth, and Structures they've played.

PLAYING THE MIDDLE AGES (CONTINUED)
PLAY AREAS, PLAYING CARDS, AND PLAYER TURNS

Each player's Accord card sets up the player's play area; denoting their **Coterie**, their **Structures**, and their **Wealth**.

Coteries

Each player has a Coterie area where cards are added. A player may add cards to their own Coterie, or another player's.

When a player adds a card to a Coterie, they follow the played card's Character ability.

When a player adds a card to another player's Coterie, *before following the played card's Character ability*, each player, beginning with the player who added the card, each draw 1 card.

After a player uses the added card's Character ability, if the added card's Character Icon matches the player's Accord Character Icon, then they either draw a card or play the top card to their Wealth.



COTERIE SEQUENCE EXAMPLE

Dan has the Purple/Noble Accord Card. He adds this card to Warn's Coterie.


Dan draws 1 card. Then Warn draws 1 card.


Next, Dan uses the played card's Character ability.


Finally, Dan either draws 1 card or plays the top card to his Wealth.

Any time an ability or text mentions "the top," it is referring to the top card of the deck. Additionally, any time a player is instructed to draw a card, they draw the top card of the deck.

After adding a card to a Coterie, if the player's Coterie has 3 or more cards in it, the player returns all of the cards in their Coterie to their hand.

If there were any  cards in their Coterie, they must discard one card from their hand.

Then, for each non- card in their Coterie, they receive one Action. For each Action, they play a card from their hand to their Structures.


After using their Actions, they must discard all  cards from their hand.

COTERIE RETURN EXAMPLE

After adding a card to a Coterie, Liz has these 4 cards in her Coterie.

After moving her Coterie cards to her hand, she discards one card.

She gains 2 Actions.

After spending her Actions, she must discard all  from her hand.



Each Social card's Crisis Icon corresponds to its card back. Players are encouraged to watch other players to ensure they discard the correct amount of cards. Cards in the discard are always face down.

Note that the above rules are covered on the Player Turn Cards.

Wealth and Structures

Each player also has a Structures area and a Wealth area. When a card is in a player's Structure Area, only its Structure part is used. When a card is in a player's Wealth Area, only its Wealth part is used.

When a card is played to a player's Structure area, that card's Structure ability is followed to the best of the player's ability.

All Abilities in this game, unless they include "may" are mandatory and must be completed to the best of the player's ability.

The Deck and Ending the Turn

If at any point during a player's turn the deck has no cards remaining, the discard is shuffled to create a new, face up deck.

After a player takes their turn, the player to their left takes a turn, unless the discard has been shuffled for the second time.

ENDING THE GAME AND SCORING

If, during a player's turn, the discard was shuffled to form a new deck for the second time, the game ends after they complete their turn.

Each player flips their Accord card to the other side, and moves all cards in their Coterie to their hand.

Each player scores points for the cards in their Structures, according to each card in their Structures.

Each player scores 1 point for each Wealth Icon on the cards in their Wealth.

Each player reveals their hand and scores 2 points for each of their Accord's Icon in their hand.

In the event of a tie, the player with the most cards in their Wealth and Structures wins. If a tie still exists, the player with the most Wealth Icons in their hand, Wealth, and Structures wins.