

GLADIUS



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COMPONENTS



5 Spectator Cards



20 Gladiator Cards



95 Influence Cards



3 Podium Cards



3 Bet Slot Cards



6 Event Cards



6 Vote Cards



35 Bet Tokens



1 First Player Token

GAME SETUP

For 2-player setup, see page 3.

- 1 Separate all of the cards by their different types. The Vote cards are only used in the 2-player variant and can be returned to the box.
- 2 To form the Gladiator deck, shuffle the Gladiator cards face down, placing them in the middle of the play area.
- 3 To form the Event deck, shuffle the Event cards face down, placing them next to the Gladiator deck.
- 4 Place the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place Podium cards above the Gladiator and Event decks.
- 5 Place the 3 Bet Slot cards in a row below the Gladiator and Event decks. Leave room below the Bet Slot cards for Gladiators and Influence cards.



Gladiator Deck



Gladiator

Influence Cards



Centurion's Starting Items

Spectator Card



Influence Cards



Bet Tokens



1st Player Token



- 6 Give each player a Spectator card (Beast Tamer, Biggest Fan, Centurion, Senator, or Spy Master). Players may be randomly dealt their Spectator or may choose, depending on how the group decides.
- 7 Each player also takes all items associated with their Spectator:
 - 19 Influence cards
 - 7 Bet tokens, keep these hidden.
- 8 Each player shuffles their Influence cards face down, placing the deck in front of them, and then draws their starting hand. In a 3-4 player game, draw 6 Influence cards. In a 5-player game, draw 5. You can always look at your cards, but keep them hidden from other players.
- 9 The player who most recently ate Italian food receives the first player token.

2-PLAYER VARIANT SETUP*



- 1 Separate all of the cards by their different types. Return the Event cards to the box.
- 2 Place the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place Podium cards in the middle of the play area.
- 3 Place the 3 Bet Slot cards in a row below the Podium cards. Leave room below the Bet Slot cards for Gladiator and Influence cards.
- 4 To form the Gladiator deck, shuffle the Gladiator cards face down, placing them in the middle of the play area.
- 5 Give each player a Spectator card (Beast Tamer, Biggest Fan, Centurion, Senator, or Spy Master). Players may be randomly dealt their Spectator or may choose, depending on how they decide.

Spectator Card



Influence Cards



Bet Tokens



Gladiator



Influence



Gladiator



Podium Cards



Bet Slot Cards



Spectator Deck



Vote Cards



- 6 Each player also takes all items associated with their Spectator:



19 Influence cards



7 Bet tokens, keep these hidden.

- 7 Give each player a set of three Vote cards, one each for Fight , Theatrics , and Luck .

- 8 Each player shuffles their Influence cards face down, placing the deck in front of them, and then draws their starting hand of 7 cards. You can look at your cards, but keep them hidden from other players.

- 9 The player who most recently ate Italian food receives the first player token.

***Important:** *Gladius* is played differently at 2 players than it is at 3+ players. The 2-player variant of *Gladius* has a few minor changes from the 3-5 player game rules. These changes are indicated in a light blue box like this one.

OVERVIEW

In *Gladius*, players are Roman spectators trying to make the most money by betting on Gladiators competing in the Gladiatorial games. Players will evaluate the competing teams of Gladiators, place Bets based on who might win (or lose!), and play cards that will influence which team will be victorious. After three rounds of battle, the winner is the player with the most victory points, earned by cunningly betting on the Gladiatorial teams competing in these glorious trials!

HOW TO PLAY

Gladius takes place over three rounds. Each round consists of five phases:

1. Reveal Event and Gladiators
2. Place Bets
3. Perform Actions
4. Determine the Round Winner
5. Clean Up

Phase 1 - Reveal Event and Gladiators



Reveal the top card of the Event deck, placing it face up next to the Event deck. This card indicates how to set up the Gladiators.

Starting from the left side of the Event card and continuing to the right, reveal and place the specified number of Gladiator cards below each Bet Slot card.

Place all the indicated Gladiators below the Bet Slot card before proceeding to the next. Each group of Gladiators below a Bet Slot card, whether 1 or 2, makes up the Gladiator team.

In this example, reveal and place 2 Gladiators, side by side, below the left Bet Slot card. Repeat this for the middle and right Bet Slot cards.



Gladiators can be skilled in one or more of three categories: Fight , Theatrics , and Luck . The bottom right of each Gladiator card displays the Gladiator's prowess in each of these Skills. The higher the number, the better their ability in each skill.

The bottom right of the Event card shows what Skill(s) the Event demands of the Gladiators this round. The possible Demanded Skills are Fight , Theatrics , and Luck . Each round will be decided by one or two Demanded Skills.



On the left, the Event demands Theatrics, while on the right the Event demands both Fight and Luck.

Phase 1 - Vote on Event and Reveal Gladiators

Draw 3 cards from the Gladiator deck, one at a time, and place each card face up below a different Bet Slot card. These are the Gladiator teams that players will bet on.

Each player secretly chooses one of the three Skills and places the matching Vote card from their hand face down above the Podium cards.

The two Skills players select will be the Demanded Skills for the round. If both players select the same Skill, there will only be one Demanded Skill for the round (e.g., If both players select Fight , the Demanded Skill is Fight . If one player selects Fight  and the other player selects Theatrics  the Demanded Skills are Fight  and Theatrics .

Vote cards remain face down until the end of the round.

Phase 2 - Place Bets

Starting with the player who has the first player token, and continuing clockwise around the table, each player places one Bet token face down on an available slot on the Bet Slot card of their choice. If a Gladiator team's Bet Slot card has no available Bet slots, players cannot place additional Bet tokens on it. Each Bet Slot card may only hold a number of Bet tokens up to the number of players in the game. So in a 4-player game, players can fill the top row of Bet slots, along with the 3+, and the 4+ Bet slots.



All Bet tokens are placed face down and remain face down until the end of the game. You can only place a total of two Bets each round. This is your first one, so bet wisely.

Players have two types of Bet tokens: Gold and Bronze. Gold Bet tokens only score if they are placed on a 1st place team. They are worth the number of points printed on them.

Bronze Bet tokens only score if they are placed on a 3rd place team. They are worth 2 points each, plus 1 additional point for each opponent's Gold Bet token that was also placed on the 3rd place team for that round.

Phase 3 - Perform Actions

Starting with the player who has the first player token, and continuing clockwise around the table, players take turns performing one of three possible actions:

- **Play an Influence card.** Influence cards let players affect the outcome of battle by increasing or decreasing a Gladiator's Skill level, or neutralizing a Gladiator's skills; swapping out, or adding, Gladiators; and even moving cards and looking at them.

Phase 3 - Perform Actions - continued

Players play Influence cards from their hand. The top-right corner of each Influence card indicates whether an Influence card is played face up or face down. If both the  and  are present, then the player must decide before playing the card.



Face-up Influence cards:

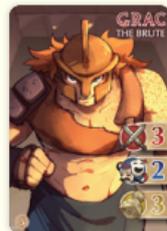
Reveal the card to all players, resolve the effects immediately, and place in your discard pile.



Face-down Influence cards:

Place the card in a column directly below the Gladiator of your choice. During Phase 4 of each round, face-down Influence cards are revealed, triggering their effects. Face-down Influence cards only affect the individual Gladiator they are played below, not the entire Gladiator team.

Tip: Don't forget, only the Skills listed on the Event card for a round contribute to a Gladiator team's final score!



- **Activate your Spectator's Ability.** Each player has a different Spectator, and each Spectator has a unique ability. To perform their Spectator's ability, players must pay its cost by discarding a number of Influence cards face down from their hand. The cost to perform each Spectator's ability is located in the box on the Spectator card.

After discarding the appropriate number of Influence cards, perform the Spectator's ability. If a player does not have the required number of Influence cards in hand, they may not activate their Spectator's ability.

- **Place your second Bet.** Choose a Gladiator team with an available slot on its corresponding Bet Slot card and place a Bet token on it. **Remember:** Players can only place a total of two Bets during each round. After placing your second Bet, you cannot perform any actions for the remainder of the round. All other players who have not placed their second Bet may continue performing actions.

Players continue taking turns, performing one action at a time, until all players have placed their second Bet token. The last player to place their second Bet token claims the first player token.

***Note:** You may look at any of your Bet tokens or Influence cards you have played at any time during the game.*



Tip: If this is your first game, we recommend playing a total of 2-3 Influence cards each round. You get to carry over any Influence cards you don't use and will draw more at the end of each round.

Phase 4 – Determine the Round Winner

After all players have placed their second Bet, determine which Gladiator team wins the round. Perform each step below, in order:

- 1. Reveal face-down cards:** Flip all face-down Influence and Gladiator cards face up. Make sure to keep each Influence card below the Gladiator they were played on.
- 2. Determine Demanded Skills:** Check the Event card to see what the Demanded Skills are for the round. Remember: Any Skill not listed on the Event card is ignored during scoring.



Reveal Vote cards: The Skills listed on the Vote cards are the Demanded Skill(s) for the round.

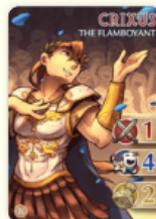


Applicable Skills:
Fight + Theatrics

Gladiator Team Score: 10

Crixus

1
 4
 N/A



Individual Score:

2
 5
 N/A

-
 +3
 N/A



+3
 -
 N/A



-2
 -2
 N/A



Cassia



Mystic Healer discards Stab Wound.



Individual Score:



- If present, resolve the Mystic Healer by discarding the card that has the greatest negative effect on that Gladiator's Demanded Skills.

3. **Calculate Gladiator Team score:** Where applicable, resolve cards that set a Gladiator's Demanded Skill to zero (**Note:** *If a Gladiator's Skill reaches zero, it cannot be reduced further*). Next, apply the modifiers, adding to or subtracting from the Gladiator's Demanded Skill(s). Finally, add together the value of all Demanded Skills to get the Gladiator's individual score.
 - On teams featuring one Gladiator, their individual score is their team score.
 - On teams featuring more than one Gladiator, combine individual scores to get the team score.

Ties: If there is a tie for score amongst Gladiator teams, look at the numbers at the bottom left of each Gladiator card that is part of the tie. The team with the Gladiator that has the highest number among the tied teams wins.

4. **Crown the Victors:** Place all Bet tokens from the highest scoring Gladiator team on the 1st Place Podium card in a face-down stack. When placing Bet tokens, they should be placed on the slot corresponding to the current round.

5. **Return Bet tokens:** Return all Bet tokens from the 2nd Place Gladiator team face down to their owners. Returned tokens may be used in future rounds.



6. **Remove the Defeated:** Place all Bet tokens from the lowest scoring Gladiator team on the 3rd Place Podium card in a face-down stack. When placing Bet tokens, they should be placed on the slot corresponding to the current round.

Remember: Keep all Bet tokens face down until the end of the game!

If it is Round One or Two, continue with Phase 5.

If it is Round Three, skip Phase 5 and skip to Ending the Game.

Phase 5 – Clean Up

- Place all used Gladiator and Influence cards in their respective discard piles.
- Each player draws 2 Influence cards from their deck.
- Each player whose hand of Influence cards exceeds their starting hand size discards down to the hand limit.

Running out of cards
If any deck runs out before the end of the game, shuffle that deck's discard pile to form a new deck.

Remember: The hand limit is 7 cards for 2 players, 6 cards for 3-4 players, 5 cards for 5 players.

 Return used Vote cards to their owners.

This is the end of the round. Play proceeds to the next round starting with Phase 1.

ENDING THE GAME

The game ends after Phase 4 of Round Three. To calculate each player's final score, perform the following steps:

Reveal all of the Bet tokens on the 1st Place Podium card. Remove any Bronze Bet tokens from the Podium. They do not score. Calculate the total value of each player's Gold Bet tokens, among all rounds, on the 1st Place Podium card. Gold Bet tokens are worth the amount of points printed on them.

Reveal all of the Bet tokens on the 3rd Place Podium card. Keep each stack separated by round.

For each of the three rounds, calculate the total value of each player's Bronze Bet tokens on the 3rd Place Podium card. Bronze Bet tokens are worth 2 points each, plus 1 additional point for each opponent's Gold Bet token that is also on the 3rd Place Podium card for that round.

Your final score is the total victory points you earned from your Gold Bet tokens and Bronze Bet tokens combined. The player with the most victory points wins!

If there is a tie, the tied player with the highest value of unused Bet tokens wins. If there is still a tie, the victory is shared.

End of Game Scoring Example:



Beast Tamer
15 pts.



Spy Master
13 pts.



Senator
12 pts.

Beast Tamer (orange) scores 9 points for their 5 & 4 Gold Bet tokens in 1st Place. Also, they add 3 points for each of their Bronze Bet tokens in 3rd Place (2 points plus 1 point from the Spy Master's Gold Bet token).

Spy Master (purple) scores 9 points for their 5 & 4 Gold Bet tokens in 1st Place. Also, they add 4 points for their Bronze Bet token in 3rd Place (2 points plus 1 point for each of the Senator and Beast Tamer's Gold Bet tokens).

Senator (blue) scores 10 points for their 4, 3, & 3 Gold Bet tokens in 1st Place. Also, they add 2 points for their Bronze Bet token in 3rd Place.



Note: In this example, each of the Beast Tamer's Bronze Bet tokens are worth 3 points, giving them a total of 6 points.

Gladius Emperors
Alain & Tania Uboldi
Andrew Hovanec
Rana Koran
Robert
Sean Lim
Tony Torebka
William Dunmire III

Gladius Founders
Andrew Veen
Caleb Schmucker
Chuck Fowler
Clay McKnight
Cristian Flores Rivera
Dave "Chirpy" Pleyel
Fabrice & Laurence
Garrett Girard
George Fan
Ginny Chan
Henry and Kasey
Monahan-Tamayo
Josh Sproull
Kenny Fortson
Matt Craver
Mauro Jr. & Mylene Caña
Mimi Bennett
Mo T. Le'Sav
Richardus Forestaius
Robert Modzelewski
Sean & Joelene McKenzies
Thomas Gutschmidt
Toni Garcia
Tony Torebka
Vincent Deloso