INTRODUCTION

In Arena Maximus, 2-5 players take on the roles of brave charioteers participating in the great Arena Maximus races. Each player's chariot must survive not only the arena's traps and pitfalls, but the lethal intentions of his opponents. Nothing is fair in the Arena, where speed is the great seductress, luring the charioteers on to glory or death.

Object of the Game

To win, your chariot must be the first to cross the finish line. You must race as quickly as you can around the track in order to cross the finish line first, but be careful not to go too fast and lose control, since crashes can cost you the race.

Whip Card   Rein Card   Magic Card   Chariot Marker

Damage Marker (1 damage)
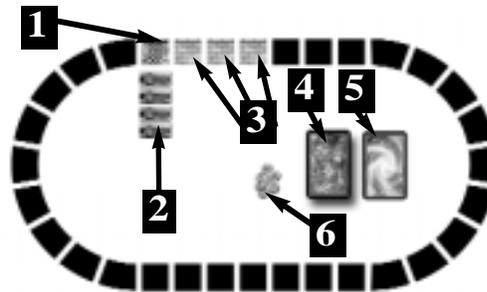
Damage Marker (3 damage)

Components

- **Chariots:** These five rectangular markers represent the chariots that the players are racing. Each marker has a colored stripe (red, yellow, green, blue, or black). One side of each marker has a beige background; the reverse side has a pale lime background. (The chariots' background colors have no effect on game play, but are used to indicate which chariots have moved, as explained later in these rules.)

- **Chariot Tile**: Each chariot marker has a corresponding tile which matches its color (red, yellow, green, blue, or black) and artwork. Your chariot tile also provides your chariot's Beast, Driver, and Chariot scores, as well as its crash status:

  CHARIOT TILE

  1. Wheel Icon: One side of the tile has a wheel icon, which indicates that your chariot has not crashed. On the reverse side, the tile has a *broken* wheel icon, indicating that your chariot has already crashed once. At the beginning of the game, place your tile with the unbroken wheel side face up.

  2. Beast Score: This score indicates how quickly your chariot can change its speed.

  3. Driver Score: This score indicates how many cards you can discard before refreshing your hand, and how many cards you can devote to attacking other chariots. (Refreshing your hand and attacking are explained later in these rules.)

  4. Chariot Score: This is how much damage your chariot can take before crashing. If your chariot takes an amount of damage equal or greater than its Chariot score, it crashes.

- **Racing Deck**: This deck contains the whip, rein, and magic cards you need to steer your chariot over the perilous track.

- **Damage Markers**: These small markers are placed on your chariot tile to keep track of the damage taken by your chariot. Some markers represent 1 damage; others represent 3 damage. When a chariot has taken damage equal to or greater than its Chariot score, it **crashes** (as explained later in these rules).

- **Track Tiles**: Some of these tiles are curved and some are straight. Before the game begins, they are put together to form the great Arena Maximus race track.

- **The Start/Finish Line**: This special track tile is double-sided and indicates where the race begins and ends. It cannot be moved or bypassed by spells. (Spells are explained at the end of these rules.)

GAME SETUP

To get the game ready for playing, follow the steps below:

1. Each player is randomly assigned a chariot tile, and takes the corresponding chariot. Each player places his chariot tile in front of him with the unbroken wheel side showing face up. Any unassigned chariot tiles are placed, with their chariots, back in the box.

2. Place the Start/Finish Line track tile on the table to start the track.

GAME SETUP DIAGRAM

1. Start/Finish Line
2. Chariots are placed here (the first player's chariot is closest to the tile)
3. First three tiles are face-up
4. Racing Deck
5. Discard Pile
6. Damage Markers

3. Divide the remaining track tiles into two facedown stacks: one stack of curved tiles and one stack of straight tiles. Shuffle both stacks.

4. Take the top 6 tiles from the straight tile stack (without looking at them), and place them face-down, end-to-end to form a line of 7 tiles with the Start/Finsh line at one end (as illustrated in the "Game Setup Diagram").

5. Take the top 9 tiles from the curved tile stack (again without looking at them) and place them face-down, end-to-end in an extension of the straight track, to form the first corner of the track (as illustrated in the "Game Setup Diagram").

6. In the same fashion, draw and place another 7 straight tiles and then the remaining 9 curved tiles to complete the oval track as illustrated. There will be 4 straight tiles left over. Without looking at them, put them back in the box, as they will not be used in this game.

7. Turn over the first three straight tiles next to the Start/Finish Line track tile, revealing their faces (as illustrated in the "Game Setup Diagram").

8. Shuffle the racing deck and deal 7 cards to each player. Players may look at their cards, but must not show them to their opponents. Place the remainder of the racing deck in the center of the track.

9. Place all the damage counters in a pile where the players can easily reach them.

10. Randomly choose a first player. Starting with the first player and going clockwise around the table, each player places his chariot next to the Start/Finish Line on the *inside* of the track (as illustrated in the "Game Setup Diagram"). Each chariot should be placed *below* the previous chariot, so that the first player's chariot is at the top of a "line" and adjacent to the Start/Finish Line tile itself. All chariots should have their *beige* backgrounds showing face up.

THE CARDS

The racing deck contains a mix of whip, rein, and magic cards. **Whip cards** affect your chariot's speed, **rein cards** are played to swerve around the dangers of the track, and **magic cards** are wild cards: you can play them in place of any other card.

In addition to their other effects, whip and rein cards also provide **skill,** as indicated by the symbols on their upper left-hand corners. Each skill has a colored icon (green, yellow, red, blue, or black) that corresponds to a hazard found on the track. (Hazards and skills are explained later in these rules.) Magic cards provide no *specific* skills, but are wild and considered to have *any* skill icon.

THE SPEED POOL

During the game, each player maintains a **speed pool**. *Your speed pool is made up of whip cards you have played, face up, onto the table in front of you.* The number of whip cards in your speed pool is how many track tiles your chariot *must* move during a turn. For example, if you have three whip cards in your speed pool, you *must* move your chariot three tiles ahead during your turn.

Rounds of Play

The game is played in a series of **rounds**. Each round of play consists of one **turn** for each player. The players' turn order is determined by their chariots' positions in the race: The player in *last* place takes the *first* turn in the round, then the player in second-to-last place takes a turn, and so on until the player who started the round in the lead takes the last turn of the round.

Stacking: If a chariot ends its move in the same tile as one or more other chariots, place it *below* the other chariots (furthest away from the tile). In this way, chariots are "lined up" below each other, with the first chariot to enter the tile on the top of the line (adjacent to the tile), and the most recent chariot to enter the tile on the bottom of the line (farthest from the tile).

STACKING EXAMPLE

In this example, chariot A entered the tile first, chariot B entered the tile second, and chariot C entered the tile last. During the next round, chariot A will leave the tile first, chariot B will leave the tile second, and chariot C will leave the tile last.
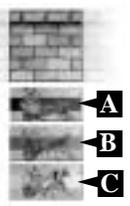
Ties: During the round, if two or more chariots are in the same tile (as they are at the beginning of the game), the player whose chariot is on the *top* of the stack (i.e., the chariot that entered the tile first, and is adjacent to the tile) goes first.

Flipping Chariots: After moving a chariot, flip it over so its other background color is showing. (During the first round, this means flipping it from its beige side to its lime side.) In this way, the players can tell which chariots have moved and which ones haven't by looking to see which color background the chariots are showing. Once all chariots have been turned to the new background color, the round ends and a new round begins.

Playing The Game

During your turn, you must play through the following four phases in the order below:

Phase 1: Set Speed
Phase 2: Discard
Phase 3: Draw Cards
Phase 4: Chariot Movement

Phase 1: Set Speed

During this phase, you may adjust your speed by changing the number of whip cards in your speed pool. You may keep your speed the same, or you may:

- **Speed Up**: Play one or more whip cards from your hand into your speed pool (onto the table in front of you).

OR

- **Slow Down**: Discard one or more whip cards from your speed pool into the discard pile.

Whether speeding up or slowing down, *you may not play or discard a number of cards higher than your chariot's Beast score (as indicated on your chariot tile).* If your chariot's Beast score is 3, for example, you may not play more than three whip cards into your speed pool in one turn, and you may not discard more than three whip cards from your speed pool in one turn. ***Example:*** *Scott's chariot has a Beast score of 2 and a current speed pool of 5. He sees a dangerous tile coming up and wants to slow down, so he uses his Set Speed Phase to discard cards from his speed pool. Scott can only discard two cards from his speed pool (reducing his speed pool to 3) because of his chariot's Beast score.*

Phase 2: Discard

Next, you may discard a number of cards from your hand equal to or less than your Driver score. For example, if your Driver Score is 2, you may discard up to 2 cards from your hand. Discarding is useful when you have cards in your hand you don't need, and you want to free up room in your hand for cards you will need later in the turn. If you have many whip cards in your hand, for instance, when what you really need are rein cards, it would be good to discard the whips in hopes of drawing more reins.

Phase 3: Draw Cards

Refresh your hand back up to 7 cards. Note, however, that ***cards in your speed pool count toward your hand size for this purpose***. In other words, you must draw cards until you have a *total* of 7 cards in your hand *and* in your speed pool. If you have a speed pool of 1, for example, and 4 cards in your hand, you

would draw 2 cards (1+4+2=7).

As you can see, the more cards you have in your speed pool (the faster your chariot is going), the fewer cards you have in your hand to play (the harder it is to steer).

If the racing deck is exhausted, shuffle the discard pile to make a new racing deck.

Phase 4: Movement and Resolution

During this phase, you must move your chariot marker a number of tiles equal to the number of whip cards in your speed pool. (For example, if your speed pool is 2, you must move your chariot two tiles.)

You move your chariot around the inside of the track (and not on top of the track tiles themselves). You must resolve *each* tile your chariot enters before your chariot may move into the next tile.

For example, if your chariot's current speed pool is 3, you must resolve the first tile before moving your chariot into the second tile, and resolve the second tile before moving it into the third tile.

Resolution

When you move your chariot marker, you must resolve each tile into which it moves by following the steps in the order below.

1. **Ramming:** You may try to ram any opposing chariots in the entered tile.
2. **Blocking**: Opposing chariots in that tile may try to keep your chariot out.
3. **Tile Effects**: Resolve jumps, hazards, and rocks.
4. **Attacking:** Your may try to attack any opposing chariots in the tile.

Note: If there are no other chariots in the tile, skip the ramming, blocking, and attacking steps.

1. Ramming

If your chariot is moving into a tile that contains another chariot, you have the option of **ramming** that chariot.

To ram: you must discard from your hand at least one **set** of whip and rein cards. (A *set* is made up of 1 whip card and 1 rein card.) For each set you discard, your opponent's chariot receives 2 damage. (Damage is explained later in these rules.) Your Driver score limits the number of sets you can discard when ramming another chariot. Thus, if your Driver score is 2, you cannot discard more than 2 sets of cards when ramming.

To cancel a ram: your opponent may *cancel* your sets by discarding his own sets. For each set your opponent discards, he cancels one of your sets (cancelling its 2 damage) and gives *your* chariot 1 damage instead. Your opponent cannot discard more sets of cards than you played to ram him, but his Driver score has no effect on this number. For example, an opponent with a Driver score of 1 can discard 2 sets of cards if you discarded 2 sets to ram him, but he may not discard more than that.

Example: *Scott is moving his chariot into a tile occupied by Kevin's chariot. Scott wants to ram Kevin's chariot and his Driver score is 2, so he discards 2 whips and 2 reins, for a total of 2 sets. Kevin does not want to take 4 damage (which would be the result of 2 sets) so he discards one set of his own—1 whip and 1 rein card—to cancel one of Scott's sets and give Scott's chariot 1 damage. (Even though Kevin's Driver score is 1, he could have played 2 sets of cards if he'd had them to cancel both of Scott's sets.) In the end, Scott's chariot takes 1 damage and Kevin's chariot takes 2 damage. Scott places 1 damage marker on his chariot tile, and Kevin places 2 on his.*

Multiple rams: If your chariot is moving into a tile containing two or more chariots, you may ram each of them once, in any order you wish. You may only ram a given chariot once per turn. A chariot that you have rammed may still attempt to block you when you move into its tile.

2. Blocking

If your chariot is moving into a tile containing an opponent's chariot, that opponent has the option of trying to **block** your chariot.

To block: your opponent must discard one or more rein cards from his hand. His Driver score limits the number of rein cards he can discard when blocking. Thus, if your opponent's Driver score is 2, he cannot discard more than 2 reins cards when blocking. (Note that if your opponent discards more than one card to block, he must discard them all at the same time.)

To cancel a block: you must discard a number of rein cards equal to the number discarded by your opponent. You are not limited by your Driver score when discarding cards to cancel the block. ***If you fail to cancel one or more blocking***

cards, your chariot does not move into the tile, and your turn immediately ends.
Once you have cancelled a block, your opponent may not try to block your chariot again.

Example: Scott is moving his chariot into a tile occupied by Tod's chariot. Tod tries to block Scott by discarding 3 reins cards (Tod's Driver score is 3). Scott doesn't have 3 reins in his hand, so his chariot is blocked: it does not move into Tod's tile, and Scott's turn is now over. (If Scott had played 3 reins, he would have avoided Tod's block and moved into Tod's tile.)

Multiple blocks: If your chariot is moving into a tile containing two or more opponents' chariots, each of those opponents has the option of trying to block your chariot. Starting with the first opponent to your left and going clockwise around the table, *each* of your opponents with a chariot in the tile may try to block your chariot by discarding rein cards as described above. After going around the table, add up all the rein cards that have been discarded to block. This total is the number of rein cards *you* must discard in order to cancel the block.

Example: Kevin is moving his chariot into a tile occupied by Scott and Tod's chariots. Because Scott is sitting first to Kevin's left, he has first option to block, and discards 1 rein card. Now it's Tod's chance to block. He doesn't have to block if he doesn't want to, but since Scott has already put 1 card in, Tod decides to discard 2 rein cards of his own, bringing the total block to 3 rein cards. If Kevin wants to cancel the block, he must discard 3 rein cards.

3. Tile Effects
Once you have moved your chariot into a tile, you must resolve any effects of that tile. (See "Tile Effects" for a complete list of effects and how to resolve them.)

4. Attacking
After resolving the effects of your tile, if your chariot is in the same tile as an opponent's chariot, you may try to **attack** his chariot.

To attack: you must discard one or more whip cards from your hand. For each whip you discard, your opponent's chariot receives 1 damage. Your Driver score limits the number of whip cards you can play when attacking another chariot. Thus, if your Driver score is 2, you cannot discard more than 2 whip cards when attacking.

To cancel an attack: your opponent may *cancel* your attack by discarding his own whip cards. For each whip your opponent discards, he cancels one of your whips and the 1 damage it would have inflicted upon his chariot. Your opponent is not limited by his Driver score when discarding cards to cancel your whip cards.

Example: Kevin has moved his chariot into a tile occupied by Scott's chariot. Kevin now wants to attack Scott's chariot, so he discards 2 whip cards (Kevin's Driver score is 2, permitting him to do so). Scott discards 1 whip card (cancelling one of Kevin's whips), so he takes 1 damage. He places a damage marker on his chariot tile.

To counter-attack: after your attempt to attack an opponent is resolved, that opponent then has an opportunity to attack your chariot in return. It is resolved as described above, except that your chariot is the target and takes damage from uncancelled whip cards. (In the example above, after taking his damage, Scott can attack Kevin's chariot in return, even though it is Kevin's turn.) Note that an opponent cannot counter-attack unless you attack him first.

Multiple Attacks: If your chariot is in the same tile as two or more chariots, you may attack each of them once, in any order you wish.

Revealing New Tiles
At the beginning of the game, only the starting line and first three track tiles are face-up. Over the course of the game, the rest of the track tiles are revealed in this manner: If, at any time, your chariot is in the last face-up tile, immediately turn the next three track tiles face-up. In this way, the track is revealed three tiles at a time as the chariots move forward around it.

Turn End
After you have moved your chariot as far as you can, flip it over so its other background color is showing. (During the first round, this means flipping it from its beige side to its lime side.) Your turn is over and play passes to the next player according to the turn order.

Crossing the Finish Line
If you move your chariot into the Start/Finish Line tile during your turn, your

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TILE EFFECTS
Below is a complete list of tiles, their effects, and how they are resolved.

Empty
When your chariot moves into an empty tile, nothing happens.

Rocks
Each rocks tile has a **rating**. When your chariot moves into a rocks tile, you must discard a number of rein cards from your hand *equal* to the rock's rating to swerve through the rocks. If you do not discard enough rein cards (either because you don't have them in your hand or because you're holding them back), your chariot takes 1 damage for each rein card you are short.
Example: Scott moves his chariot into a rocks tile with a 3 rating, so he must discard 3 rein cards. He only discards 2 rein cards, so his chariot takes 1 damage.

Jump
Each jump tile has a **rating**. When your chariot moves into a jump tile, you must have *at least as many cards in your speed pool* as the jump's rating to make the jump. If you don't have that many whip cards in your speed pool, your chariot takes 1 damage for each card that you are short.
Example: Scott moves his chariot into a jump tile with a 3 rating. Scott currently has 4 whip cards in his speed pool, so his chariot takes no damage. If Scott only had 1 whip card in his speed pool, his chariot would have taken 2 damage.

Hazard
Each hazard tile has at least one skill icon. When your chariot moves into a hazard tile, you must discard from your hand cards showing the skill icons on the tile in order to avoid the hazard. If you don't discard enough cards (either because you don't have them in your hand or because you're holding them back), your chariot takes 1 damage for each icon you are short.
Special Rule: Your chariot is immune to hazards of its own color. If your chariot is red, for example, you may ignore all red hazard icons.
Example: Scott moves his chariot into a hazard tile showing 1 green skill icon and 1 blue skill icon. Scott discards from his hand a whip card with a blue icon on it, but because his chariot is green, he does not have to discard a green icon to avoid the hazard. His chariot takes no damage.

Recovery Stables
When your chariot moves into a recovery stables tile, you have the *option* of ending your chariot's movement in that tile, regardless of your chariot's current speed pool, to patch up your chariot and get fresh beasts. If you choose to do so, then the following things occur:

1. Immediately remove all damage markers from your chariot tile.
2. Discard all cards from your speed pool.
3. Discard as many cards as you want from your hand and then refresh your hand back up to 7 cards.
4. Your turn ends.

The Start/Finish Line
The game ends at the end of any round in which at least one chariot enters or moves through this tile.

chariot has **crossed the finish line**. Continue your move until you have used all of your movement for the turn. Ignore all tile effects of all tiles *after* the finish line tile. A chariot that has crossed the finish line cannot be attacked, blocked, rammed, or affected by spells. (Spells are explained at the end of these rules.)

Kingmaking

It is possible to be in a position where you cannot win this round, but can choose which of two or more other players *will* win by interacting with those players' chariots (ramming, blocking, attacking, etc.). If you are in this "kingmaker" position, you may not ram, block, attack, or otherwise interact with any of those players' chariots.

Example: Scott's chariot is 5 tiles from the finish line and his speed pool is 3. Kevin and Tod's chariots are both 2 tiles ahead of him (3 tiles from the finish line) and their speed pools are both 4, so both of them will cross the finish line this round. During Scott's turn, he would normally be able to ram one or both of his opponent's chariots, but because doing so may prevent one of them from winning (and thus allow the other to win), he is in a kingmaker position and may not interact with them.

DAMAGE AND CRASHES

Whenever your chariot takes damage, place damage markers on your chariot tile to indicate the amount of damage taken. Damage markers come in denominations of 1 damage and 3 damage; you may "make change" from the pile of damage markers as needed during play. If the amount of damage your chariot has taken equals or exceeds your Chariot score, your chariot **crashes**.

When your chariot crashes, if your chariot tile is showing an *unbroken* wheel icon, turn the tile over to show its *broken* wheel icon. If your chariot tile is already showing a broken wheel icon when your chariot crashes (i.e., this is your second crash of the game) then your turn is immediately over and you are eliminated from the game. Remove your chariot from the board and discard all of your cards. You receive no further turns this game.

When your chariot crashes for the first time, place it on the *outside* of the track next to the tile in which it crashed and discard your entire speed pool.

CRASH EXAMPLE

Turn 1	Turn 2	Turn 3
(The turn that the crash occurs)	(The turn after the crash)	(The second turn after the crash)
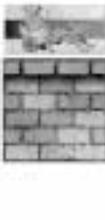
Move your chariot marker to the outside of the track and discard your speed pool.

Flip the chariot to the turn's background color, refresh your hand to 7 cards, and discard all the damage markers from your chariot tile.

Return your chariot marker to the inside of the track at the beginning of this turn and play through your turn as normal.

On your next turn, you may not play through your turn. Instead, you simply flip your chariot marker to the new round's background color, refresh your hand to 7 cards, and discard all the damage markers from your chariot tile. On your second turn after your crash, return your chariot to the inside of the track at the beginning of your turn and play through your turn as normal.

Note: Multiple chariots that crash in the same space are lined up with the first chariot to crash just above the track tiles, the next to crash above that chariot, and so on. Initiative is determined based on the order in which they crashed, with the earliest crash going first.

GAME END

At the end of a round in which one or more chariots have *crossed the finish line*,

the game ends and a winner is determined. The player whose chariot has moved the furthest *past* the Start/Finish Line tile is the winner. (Remember: If two or more chariots are tied, ties are won by the chariot that entered the tile *first* and is at the top of the "line.") Second and third place may be awarded to successive chariots, if desired.

Alternately, if all players but one have been eliminated from the game due to crashing twice, the remaining player immediately wins.

Players may agree to race for more than one lap around the arena, in which case the player who finishes the agreed-upon number of laps first wins the game.

OPTIONAL RULES

Once you are familiar with the basic game, you may wish to use the following optional rules to spice things up.

Casting Spells

During your turn, you may cast a spell from the Spell List. Each spell costs one skill of a specific color. In order to cast a spell you must discard from your hand 1 magic card and 1 other card with the proper skill on it.

For example, the "Hasten" spell requires a yellow skill icon. In order to cast "Hasten," you must discard 1 magic card and 1 card with a yellow power icon on it.

Remember, because magic cards are wild, they can be used in place of any skill icon. Therefore, you may cast *any* spell by discarding 2 magic cards.

Most spells can only be cast at the beginning of your turn. See the Spell List for complete details on spell effects and when they can be cast.

Counterspells

By discarding 2 magic cards, you can "cast a counterspell" that will cancel any spell that has just been cast. You may do this at any time immediately after another player casts a spell—even though it is not your turn.