

# PANTHEON™

A card game by Timothy Brown

*The lands are in conflict. Only those who call upon the power of the gods shall survive.*

In the ancient world, civilizations struggle against their enemies using the strength of their numbers, the hardness of bronze and iron, and the powers granted to them by fickle gods. Plagues, famines, and fire are suffered or inflicted while soldiers march to war in the name of the deities they serve. Only the civilization with the strongest pantheon will prevail.

## PANTHEON

In **Pantheon** you build an ancient civilization trying to earn the favor of powerful but fickle gods! Grow your population, build temples, wage holy wars, and call down divine wrath upon your enemies. In the end, the civilization with the largest pantheon will reign.

## SETUP

You can play with three to six players, ages 10 and up. Before you begin you need to decide on a method to resolve challenges; rolling a die is the easiest if available, otherwise you may use rock-paper-scissors or another random method.

Shuffle all the cards and then draw 20 cards and remove them entirely—they won't be used in the game. If you want a shorter game of **Pantheon** you may remove 40 cards from the deck, for a longer game, use all 108 cards.

## MANAGING CARDS

Note that some cards break the general rules of the game, so when a card disagrees with these rules, follow the card. The god discard pile holds only god cards, while all other cards go into the general discard pile. Here are a few concepts to keep in mind.

**In Play:** These cards placed in front of the player, face up, and include gods, temples, worshipers, and any Civilization cards currently in effect. Once a card is in play it cannot be returned to the player's hand.

**Columns:** Most cards are put in play in columns—vertical groups of cards that always include worshipers, and may include one temple and one god each.

**Hand:** Cards in a player's hand are kept secret from other players and are not considered in play. Only godly powers and Civilization cards that specifically affect a player's hand may remove cards in someone's hand.

**Discarding:** All cards discarded during a player's turn can be discarded in any order he chooses at the end of his turn. (This is important because opponents can draw cards from the top of a discard pile.) All Civilization cards are removed from the game after used and are not placed in a discard pile.

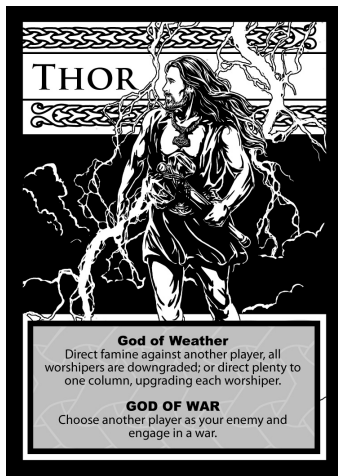
**Challenge:** Some cards will direct you to engage in a challenge. Both you and the opposing player use the method chosen during game setup (rolling the highest number on a die, playing rock-paper-scissors) to determine the winner.

**Major and Minor Powers:** Each god has two listed powers. The power listed first is the Minor power and can always be employed. The second is the Major Power, and can only be employed if the god has at least 2,000 worshipers in his column.

**Upgrading and Downgrading:** Worshiper cards are in denominations of 10, 50, 100, 500, and 1,000. Some godly powers and Civilization cards will upgrade or downgrade cards, replacing the card with either one "level" higher or lower. Replacement cards are recovered from the general discard pile, if available, or the draw deck. Decks that had cards removed are reshuffled before any upgraded or downgraded cards are discarded. If there are no available cards in either deck, an upgraded worshiper is unchanged and a downgraded worshiper is discarded.

## BEGINNING THE GAME

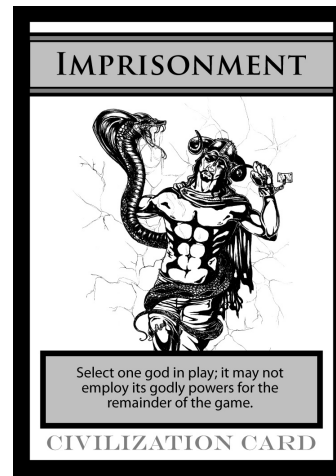
Deal five cards to each player and set the rest in the center of the play area to form the Draw Deck. There are two discard piles, the god discard pile and the general discard pile. Each player declares how many worshiper cards are in their hands, the player with the lowest number goes first, engaging in a challenge (see below) if there is a tie. Play proceeds clockwise.



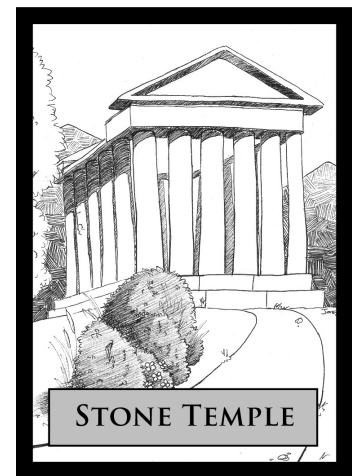
*God*



*Worshiper*



*Civilization*



*Temple*

## VICTORY

The game ends when the last card in the draw deck is taken, with the player who drew it allowed to complete his turn. When the game ends, the player with the most god cards in play wins. If all of a player's gods are from the same pantheon (Greek, Egyptian, etc.) then each counts as double. If there is a tie, the players engage in a Battle of Pantheons (see **Special Rules**, below) until one player becomes the final victor or a tie is declared.

## TAKING A TURN

During your turn you draw a card, play a card from your hand, and then either employ a godly power or play a Civilization card.

### (1) Draw a Card

Draw one card from the draw deck or the top card from either discard pile. What happens depends on the card drawn.

*If you pull a god card from the draw deck*, the god immediately goes to any player's godless column with a temple or the most worshippers. If there is no open column, the god is discarded.

*If you draw a non-god card from the draw deck or draw a card from either discard pile*, you place the card into your hand.

*If you began your turn with no cards in your hand*, draw an extra card from the draw pile and place it into your hand even if it is a god.

### (2) Play a Card

Place a temple, or worshiper card in play into one of your existing columns, or use them to start an additional column. Note that each column may only have one temple, though

you may discard a wooden temple if you wish to place a stone temple on a column instead. Gods may be added to any of your existing godless columns. You do not play Civilization cards during this step.

### (3) Employ a Special Power

You may use a power from any one god you have in play, remembering that Major powers can only be used by gods that have at least 2,000 worshippers in their column. Or you may play a Civilization card from your hand instead. (You cannot use both a godly power and Civilization card in the same turn.) Resolve the special power immediately, removing a used Civilization card from the game—it does not go into a discard pile.

## ATTRACTING GODS

Gods are drawn to the best godless temples with the highest number of worshippers. When a god card is drawn from the draw deck, and the card is placed based on the following order of priority:

- A godless temple with the highest number of worshippers. Stone temples are preferred over wooden.
- A godless temple with no worshippers. Stone temples are preferred over wooden.
- A godless column with the highest number or worshippers.
- Ties are resolved by the players engaging in a challenge, the winning player receiving the god in his column.
- If there are no godless columns in play, the god is discarded.

If you have a damaged temple, you may repair instead of employing a special power.

Play then continues with the next player to the left beginning a new turn.

## SPECIAL RULES

There are some special powers or circumstances that have rules beyond the basics. Consult the section below these come up.

### DAMAGED TEMPLES

Some godly powers and Civilization cards can be used to damage temples. They may also be damaged if a player cannot defend in War (see below). A damaged temple is turned sideways to indicated its damaged status, and if an already-damaged temple is damaged again the card is discarded instead. Damaged temples may be repaired instead of employing a special power during a player's turn, turning the card back to its original orientation.

### LOSING GODS

A god in play that does not have at least one temple or one worshiper in its column is discarded immediately.

### INCREASED WORSHIPER STRENGTH

Some godly powers and Civilization cards increase the strength of worshiper cards by multiplying their printed value, the adjusted value counting for all game purposes. (A doubled 50 Worshipers card would count as 100.) If you have more than one card that increases worshiper strength, only the highest multiplier counts and the rest are ignored.

### CONSTANT GODLY POWERS

Some godly powers apply at all times, and are marked with this symbol:



These powers need not be employed in order to take effect.

## WAR

Wars can be started by employing godly powers or playing certain Civilization cards. A player must commit at least one column to the War unless they have no worshiper cards. When a war begins, the two players involved decide which of their columns will be fighting. All the worshipers are gathered into a “war deck” and shuffled. Both players may optionally play one Civilization card before the battle, starting with the defender.

If the defender has no worshiper cards to defend, the attacker may damage one of the defender's temples.

War is resolved by both players simultaneously revealing the top card from their decks. The smaller card is discarded, with both players discarding if there is a tie. This process is repeated until one or both players have an empty war deck. If all cards from the war deck have been revealed, surviving worshiper cards are reshuffled until the war is concluded.

Once the war is resolved, the victor returns the remaining worshiper cards to any of existing columns or creating new ones. Note that any gods left without either a temple or any worshipers are immediately discarded.

## BATTLE OF PANTHEONS

If there is a tie at the end of the game, all players involved in the tie continue to play in the same turn order. On their turn they may only employ godly powers. No cards may be drawn, put into play, and no Civilization cards may be played. However, all gods may use both of their godly powers regardless of the number of worshipers.

Assess the victory conditions at the end of each player's turn, and if the tie is broken the game ends. If the godly powers available cannot change the number of gods in play, then the game ends in a draw.

## GODLY POWERS

Each god has two powers, a Major and a Minor. These powers are described in detail below.

**God of Beauty:** Select any god in play and either move it to an available column or discard it.

**God of Chaos:** Force a player to discard his hand, drawing five new cards.

**God of Creation:** This power may only be employed if there are at least 20 cards remaining in the primary draw deck. Remove all cards from play except the primary draw deck, including both discard piles, all columns and active Civilization cards for every player, and each player's hands. Restart the game with the remaining cards.

**God of Death:** Downgrade a worshiper card or attack a god in play, that god card is discarded if you win a challenge.

**God of Earthquakes:** Damage any one temple in play.

**God of Fertility:** Upgrade any one worshiper card in play.

**God of Fire:** Discard a wooden temple in play or damage a stone temple in play.

**God of the Home:** All your worshiper cards in play count as double (x2). This power is constant.

**God of Literature:** Your temples cannot be damaged or destroyed. This power is constant.

**God of Love:** Take any one worshiper in play and add it to this god's column if you win a challenge.

**God of Mischief:** Draw a random card from a player. He must immediately play the card on another player if possible (good or bad); otherwise it is discarded.

**God of Protection:** Worshiper cards in this god's column may only be reduced if you lose a challenge. This power is constant.

**God of Science:** Your worshipers may only be reduced by famine if you lose a challenge.

**God of the Sea:** Direct a flood against one other player; all his worshipers in a column with a temple are downgraded, and those without temples are discarded.

**God of Song:** All of your worshipers count as double strength (x2) during wars. This power is constant.

**God of the Sun:** Direct famine against another player; all of his worshipers are downgraded.

**God of War:** Choose another player as your enemy and engage in a war.

**God of Weather:** Direct famine against another player, all worshipers he has in play are downgraded; or direct plenty to one column, upgrading each worshiper.

**God of Wisdom:** Wars directed against you only proceed if you lose a challenge. This power is constant.



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