

A Game of Thrones Tournament Rules

The organized play program for the *A Game of Thrones* (“AGoT”) card game, sponsored by Fantasy Flight Games (“FFG”) and its international partners, will follow the organization and rules provided in this document.

For the 2008-2009 tournament season, there are three sanctioned formats for the game: “LCG,” “League,” and “Legacy.” All sanctioned AGoT events can be run as either Melee (multiplayer) events or as Joust (head to head) events.

The beginning of this document provides general rules that apply to all format and event types: LCG and Legacy, Melee and Joust. Following, there is a section on Melee events, and a section on Joust events, as well as the cardpool and deckbuilding restrictions that define the “LCG” and “Legacy” environments. League rules can be found at the end of the document.

Card Interpretation and Rules

Sanctioned tournaments are played using the most recent rules set and the most updated version of the official FAQ document, both downloadable from the AGoT website at any time. Cards are interpreted using the appropriate card rulings on the most updated FAQ found on the *A Game of Thrones* web site. During sanctioned competition, players must refer to this version of a card to settle disputes concerning the interpretation of a card’s wording or powers. Card abilities are based on card text, not artwork or card titles.



The Tournament Organizer (“TO”) is the final authority for all card interpretations, and he or she may overrule the FAQ when, in his or her opinion, a mistake or error is discovered.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Players are expected to behave in a mature and considerate manner, and to play within the rules and not abuse them. This prohibits intentionally stalling a game for time, abusing an infinite combo, inappropriate behavior, treating an opponent with a lack of courtesy or respect, etc. The TO, at his or her sole discretion, may remove players from the tournament for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Tournament Organizer Participation

The TO may participate in a tournament for which he or she is responsible only if there is a second Tournament Organizer present. This second TO must be present and announced at the beginning of the tournament, and is responsible for all rulings for games in which the primary TO is playing.

Deck Size Limits

In constructed formats (LCG and Legacy, Melee or Joust), decks must contain a minimum of sixty cards. There is no maximum deck size; however, you must be able to shuffle your deck with no assistance. Plot decks must number exactly seven cards and have no more than one of any plot card with the same title.

Pregame Procedure

Before a game begins, players randomly determine who goes first (see “Setup Turn Order,” below). This may be done any time during the pregame procedure before the players look at their hands. The following steps must be performed before each game begins:

1. Players shuffle their decks. A combination of shuffling techniques should be used to sufficiently randomize the deck.
2. Players present their decks to their opponents for additional shuffling and cutting. Passing a deck back to its owner verifies that you are satisfied with its randomization.
3. If the opponent has shuffled a player’s deck, the player may make one final cut.
4. Each player draws seven cards as their setup hand.
5. Each player, in turn, decides whether to Mulligan

(see “Mulligan Rule,” below). Once Mulligans are resolved, the game can begin.

Setup Turn Order

The winner of a coin toss (or other random method) is considered the First Player until the first plot card’s initiative has been determined. This player must place his or her cards first during setup. Once all players have placed setup cards, all setup cards are revealed simultaneously. Thereafter each turn follows the standard order set forth in the AGoT game rules.

Mulligan Rule

Before each game begins, and before any setup cards are revealed, a player may, for any reason, re-shuffle his or her opening hand into his or her deck, pass the deck back to his or her opponent for additional shuffling or cutting, and draw a new setup hand from the same deck. This may only be performed once per game.

The decision of whether or not to Mulligan passes between players following the order established by the setup coin toss. Once a player passes the opportunity to Mulligan, that player may not change his or her mind.



Official AGoT Melee Tournament Rules

A *Game of Thrones* Melee (multiplayer) tournaments are held in a series of 105 minute tournament rounds. Tournament Organizers (“TOs”) can adjust this number down to 90 minutes or up to 120 minutes as they see fit. Each tournament round, players will score points based on their order of finish within their game. After a predetermined number of tournament rounds (depending on the field size and time constraints of the tournament), the top point-scorers will play at a final table. The winner of the final table is the winner of the tournament.

Seating

Players are randomly assigned to a table in the first tournament round of a Melee tournament. Each subsequent tournament round, the players from one table should be separated throughout the overall number of tables as evenly as possible (so that the composition of any one table is not completely identical from one tournament round to the next), and the rest of the field should then be randomly assigned to these tables. Both a player’s table and a player’s seat at that table should always be assigned by the TO. Tables should be broken down in the following manner, depending on the size of the field.

- 3 players:** 1 three player table
- 4 players:** 1 four player table
- 5 players:** 1 five player table
- 6 players:** 2 three player tables
- 7 players:** 1 four player table, 1 three player table
- 8 players:** 2 four player tables
- 9 players:** 3 three player tables
- 10 players:** 2 three player tables, 1 four player table
- 11 players:** 2 four player tables, 1 three player table
- 12 players:** 3 four player tables

For Melee tournaments with more than 12 players, add an additional four player table to the closest breakdown listed above. For instance, if there are 13 players, add a four player table to the 9 player breakdown; if there are 14 players, add a four player table to the 10 player breakdown, and so on. If the tournament has five or more tables, the players from two tables should be redistributed throughout the field as evenly as possible at the start of each tournament round.



Three Player Tables (Special Rule)

When playing at a three player table, multiplayer title cards are not returned to the title pool until the end of a game round in which the title pool is empty. This means that in the first game round, the players will each select one of the six titles, leaving three titles unclaimed, still in the pool. The selected titles are not returned at the end of the first game round, and in the second game round the players will choose from the three titles they did not select in the first game round. (These titles replace their previously selected titles.) Then, at the end of the second game round, all six titles are returned to the pool for possible selection in the third game round.

Scoring

Points in Melee tournaments are acquired by defeating your opponents. A Melee is essentially a complex series of small battles between the players involved in that Melee. At different points throughout the Melee, any single player may “team up” with other opponents; at other times, that player’s efforts may find him or her trying to fend off the entirety of the field. In the end, when only one combatant is left standing, each player will be scored individually against each of the other players in the field.

When a player wins a Melee (achieves his or her victory total), the rest of the players at the table are ranked on the basis of how close each of them is to their own victory total. Players will receive 3 points for every player he or she defeats, 1 point for any tie, and 0 points for a loss. Additionally, the player who wins the entire table will receive a bonus point for his or her efforts.



For example: Ed, Jamie, Greg, and Sara are involved in a Melee. All of the players are playing single House decks, with no agendas, and need 15 power to win. Jamie finishes in first, by reaching 15 power. Ed finishes in second, with 12 power (3 away from his victory total), Sara finishes in third with 7 (8 away from her victory total), and Greg finishes in 4th with 2 power (13 away from his victory total). The scoring for this finish will be as follows:

Jamie (3 wins for 3 points each, plus 1 bonus point for winning the table) = 10 points
 Ed (2 wins for 3 points each) = 6 points
 Sara (1 win for 3 points) = 3 points
 Greg (no wins, no ties) = 0 points

For example: Aaron, Drew, Jerry, and Glen are involved in a Melee. Aaron, Drew, and Jerry are playing single House decks, with no agendas, and need 15 power to win. Glen is playing House Stark with a Treaty (agenda) to House Baratheon, and needs 20 power to win. The game ends when Drew claims his 15th power. Aaron and Jerry finish tied for second/third, with 10 power each (5 away from their victory total of 15). Glen finishes in fourth, with 14 power (6 away from his victory total of 20).

Note that “closest to victory total” is determined by an absolute number (10 is closer to 15 than 14 is to 20) rather than by a percentage of the total (14/20 is a higher percentage than 10/15).

The scoring for this finish will be as follows:

Drew (3 wins for 3 points each, plus 1 bonus point for winning the table) = 10 points
 Aaron (1 win for 3 points, 1 tie for 1 point) = 4 points
 Jerry (1 win for 3 points, 1 tie for 1 point) = 4 points
 Glen (no wins, no ties) = 0 points

Final Table

After the tournament preliminary rounds are complete, the top point-scorers will compete at the final table. Most Melee tournaments will have 2 or 3 tournament rounds of preliminaries, but this figure will always be set by the TO before the start of the event.

At Melees with 11 or fewer players, the top 3 point-scorers will compete at the final table to determine the Melee champion. In Melee’s of 12 players or more, 4 players will advance to the final table.

In the case where a spot at the final table is contested by a tied overall score, the players’ head to head performance (how they finished at any table at which they competed against each other) is the first tie breaker. The second tie breaker is strength of schedule, and the third tie breaker, if necessary, is a head to head playoff, in which the player with the most power at the end of the first game round advances. (If power is tied at the end of the first game round, advance to the end of the second game round, and so on, until one player breaks the deadlock.)

The player who wins the final table wins the tournament.

Multiplayer Titles: When One Player “Supports” Another Player

For officially sanctioned Melee tournament play, the following adjustment has been made to the rules of the multiplayer title cards.

If your multiplayer title card “Supports” another player’s title card, you cannot declare challenges against that player. In addition, when a player you support is attacked by another player, if the defending player declares no defenders, you may, by virtue of your supporting title, declare any number of your own eligible characters as defenders to that challenge. If your characters defend a challenge in support of another player, you are considered the winner (or loser, depending on the results) of the challenge, but the original target of the challenge is still responsible for any claim that would need to be resolved. (If the attacker wins, the player for whom you have declared defenders will still have to deal with the challenge’s claim.) Stealth, if applicable, must be declared against a character controlled by the player who is the original target of the attack.

***For example:** Jamie (with the Master of Coin title) supports Sara (with the Master of Laws title). Greg declares a military challenge against Sara, and declares stealth on her only eligible defender. Sara declares no defenders to the challenge. Since Jamie’s Master of Coin title supports Sara’s Master of Laws title, he now has the option of declaring any of his eligible characters as defenders for this challenge. Not wanting Greg to claim a free power, Jamie takes advantage of this option and declares one of his characters as a defender. If Jamie wins the challenge, he is considered the winning player for the purpose of responses, passive effects, and keywords like renown. If Jamie loses the challenge, he is considered the losing player for the purpose of responses, passive effects, and keywords. However, Sara would still have to satisfy the claim of the challenge if Jamie does not win as the defender.*

Table Talk

During a Melee game, players may discuss the game with one another, at any time. Of course, there is no guarantee that any given player is telling the truth, and the wise AGoT player takes everything that is said with a grain of salt. Players are not allowed, however, to show the contents of their hand, deck, or unrevealed plot cards to an opponent, unless a card effect or game effect instructs them to do so.



Official AGoT Joust Tournament Rules

Joust (head to head) tournaments for the *A Game of Thrones* card game are held in a series of 60 minute tournament rounds. Tournament Organizers (TOs) may adjust this number down to 50 minutes or up to 70 minutes as they see fit. Each tournament round, players will score points based on the result of their game. After a predetermined number of tournament rounds (depending on the field size and time constraints of the tournament), the top point-scorer is the winner of the tournament, if there is no championship round scheduled. For larger tournaments, the field will cut to a final elimination bracket. In such a tournament, the top point scorers (usually a top 4 or top 8) will then play off in single elimination championship brackets to determine the tournament champion.

Seating

Standard Swiss style pairings are preferred. Random pairings are allowed for the first round. The TO should avoid pairing family members or players who travelled together to get to the tournament, if at all possible, for the first round. For future pairings, pair players within the same score group as per Swiss style pairings.

A good rule of thumb is to always pair in halves, rather than randomly, within score groups. This allows for the subtle adjustment of players if one player has already played another player. (Note: If the TO has access to rankings or ratings, or can number his players by estimated strength, this will make pairings much easier.)

When pairing in halves, always sort the players by score group, then by the player number. Split the score group in half, pairing the top half versus the bottom half.

This has the same effect as using brackets so that the top 2 players do not meet until the last round.

Round two example: *If there are eight players in the 3 score group, sort them in player number order, then separate into two groups, 1-4 and 5-8. Pair player number 1 vs 5, 2 vs 6, 3 vs 7 and 4 vs 8. If there are seven players in the 3 score group, sort them in player number order, then separate into two groups, 1-3, 4-7. The "odd" player is always put on the bottom stack, and will be paired down to the next score group playing the highest ranked player of that score group.*





Scoring

Players are awarded tournament points at the end of each game as follows:

Match Win = 3 points

Match Loss = 0 points

Draw = 1 point

If the time limit has been reached without a winner being declared, both players are awarded a draw. These points are used to determine the winner of the tournament, or, in the case of a larger event, they are used to determine who makes the cut to the Championship elimination rounds.

Breaking Ties

If a tiebreaker between players with identical win-loss records is needed, use the following method: First check if the players with the tie have played against each other. If they have, the player that won that match gets the tie breaker.

If they have not, award “tie breaker points” by calculating the strength of each player’s schedule by combining total match points of all their opponents. The player with the most tie-breaker points wins the tie and advances. This way, the person who played the most “difficult” games wins the tiebreaker. This procedure is also called the “strength of schedule.”

Championship Rounds

If a tournament champion is to be determined by championship brackets, the number of players who will make the cut into the championship bracket must be determined and announced before the start of the tournament. Each player’s order of finish in the preliminary rounds will determine his or her seeding in the championship brackets; the player with the best record in the preliminary rounds will play against the player with the worst record in the preliminary rounds, the player with the second best record will play against the player with the second worst record, and so on. A player moves on in the brackets with a win, a player is eliminated from contention with a loss. There is no time limit in the championship rounds, and all games are played to their conclusion. The winner of the final game is the tournament champion.

Tournament formats

All *A Game of Thrones* Melee and Joust events can be run as LCG or Legacy format events. The rules specific to each of these three formats are presented here.

LCG format

These are the rules that apply specifically to a “LCG format” Tournament during the 2008-2009 organized play season.

The 2008-2009 *A Game of Thrones* World Championships will be held in the LCG format, over two days. Day one will be an LCG Joust tournament, and day two will be an LCG Melee tournament. The World Champion will be the player with the highest combined score from both tournaments.



Authorized Cards

For purposes of the LCG format, cards from the following sets are legal.

- *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* Core Set (October 2008 release)
- *A Clash of Arms* Chapter Pack Expansion Set (February 2008 -July 2008 release) (*War of Five Kings, Ancient Enemies, Sacred Bonds, Epic Battles, The Battle of Ruby Ford, Calling the Banners*)
- *A Time of Ravens* Chapter Pack Expansion Set (October 2008-February 2009 release) (*A Song of Summer, The Winds of Winter, A Change of Seasons, The Raven's Song, Refugees of War, Scattered Armies*)
- To Be Announced - Chapter Pack Expansion Set (March 2009 - August 2009 release)

Banned Cards

The following cards, even though found in the legal sets, are banned from LCG format tournament play:

A Clash of Arms

- (F 13) PYROMANCER'S CACHE
- (F43) JAQEN H'GHAR

Legacy format

These are the rules that apply specifically to a “Classic” Tournament during the 2008-2009 organized play season.

“Highlander” Deckbuilding

For the 2008-2009 Tournament Season, Legacy format will be sanctioned with “Highlander” deckbuilding rules. This means that no more than 1 copy of any card, by title, is allowed in a deck constructed for Legacy format play.

The 2009 Legacy GenCon Championships and all other sanctioned Legacy format events will be held in this “Highlander” format.

Authorized Cards

For purposes of the Legacy format, cards from the following sets are allowed, with the exception of the cards on the banned list, below.:

- All AGoT sets are allowed in the Legacy format.
- All promotional cards are allowed in the Legacy format.



Banned Cards

The following cards, even though found in the legal sets, are banned from Legacy format tournament play. All reprinted versions of any banned card are also banned from Legacy format decks.

Westeros Edition

- (R 226) KING’S PEACE
- (U 114) HEADS ON PIKES
- (R 105) COUNTERPLOT
- (U 151) THE THINGS I DO FOR LOVE

A Flight of Dragons

- (R143) OUTMANEUVER

Winter Edition

- (R233) THE GATHERING STORM

A Song of Twilight

- (U71) THE PRINCE’S LOYALIST

A Clash of Arms

- (F43) JAQEN H’GHAR

League Play

2009 AGoT LCG league play is divided into five six-week seasons. Each season is played as a self-contained entity, and the results of each season contribute to the overall storyline of the league. Following are the rules for a single season. Each store/playgroup can participate in any number of the five campaigns that they so desire.

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in a league, a playgroup must submit an application form for the league kit, signed by the member of the Night's Watch running the league and by the owner of the store hosting the league campaign. Additionally, a minimum of four participants is required for each campaign.

Weekly Scheduling and Results Tracking

Each season will run for six weeks. Each league member can play up to two official (recorded) games against every other league member each week: one "sparring" game and one "tournament" game on league tournament night.

Playgroups are encouraged to set up a consistent, time during which league members will meet at the store to play league games. At the TO's discretion, players can meet at the store to play their league games at other times as well. All league games must be played at the host store.

Each week, on "league tournament night," a swiss tournament should be held in which players meet and compete with a league deck. Players earn votes towards the league storylines based on their performance in these tournaments.

Cardpool

The initial cardpool for a league season is the *A Game of Thrones* core set and two chapter packs. (Each of the five seasons scheduled for the 2008-2009 league campaign will begin with two different chapter packs.) An additional chapter pack will be added to each player's cardpool twice throughout the course of each six week season.

Players can use the same *A Game of Thrones* core set at the beginning of each season, but they are encouraged to purchase the supplementary chapter packs through the game and hobby store that is hosting the league. This is the incentive that store owners have to host and promote organized play leagues, which in turn will draw more attention and player support for the game in your area.

Deckbuilding

League decks must have a minimum of 50 cards, with no more than 3 copies of any card (by title) permitted in any deck. Plot decks must contain 7 plot cards, with no more than 1 copy of any plot card (by title) permitted in any plot deck.

House Cards

At the beginning of each league tournament, each player must commit to a specific House card. That player must then play all of his or her games that week using that House. Players are welcome to change or tweak their deck between games, but the House card must remain consistent throughout the tournament. At the beginning of each tournament, players are welcome to change to a different House if they so desire.



Trading

Players are permitted to make a single trade, 1 card for 1 card, with their opponent after each officially recorded “sparring” game. All trades must be recorded on each player’s trade roster, which is provided in the league kit. Players are not obligated to make a trade if they cannot work out a mutually beneficial deal. Playing “sparring” games and fine-tuning your decks through trades is a key aspect of long-term success in an LCG league.

Results Tracking

Players are responsible for reporting the results of their official games to the Night’s Watch member running the league, who is then responsible for recording the results of the games on the league scorecard provided in the league kit.

Storylines

Each 6-week campaign will contribute votes to four different storylines. The results of these storylines will influence the future design of the game.

Three of the four storylines are based around the three challenges in the *A Game of Thrones* card game. For example, during the 2008-2009 tournament season, the military campaign is called “Kneel before Tywin Lannister,” the intrigue campaign is called “Conspiracies Afoot,” and the power campaign is called “Dawn of a Legend.” (These storylines are presented in full on www.agameofthrones.com.)

Each of these storylines will present a number of options regarding cards to print, characters or mechanics to feature, and directions the game can take. Depending on their finish in each week’s league tournament, players earn votes towards one of the three (military, intrigue, or power) storylines. This “first place” vote counts as 3 points towards whichever option that player chose. The “second place” finisher then gets to cast his or her vote towards one of the two remaining story lines, with this vote counting as 2 points. Finally, the last place finisher in each tournament earns the “Sansa award,” and can cast his or her vote towards the remaining story line, with this vote counting as 1 point.

The fourth story line, “The Minstrel’s Muse,” is based on the Houses that the vote-getters played in the tournament in which they acquired those votes. In other words, the first place finisher is allowed to cast a 3-point vote towards either the military, the intrigue, or the power storyline. In addition to having these three votes count towards that storyline, the three votes will also, automatically, be counted for the House that player was playing.

In addition to the weekly voting, at the end of the entire 6 week season, an overall vote will be cast in which players are able to vote on the storylines in the same manner as they would in the weekly voting, with these votes carrying double weight (6 points, 4 points, 2 points) toward the storylines to which they are cast. Win and loss results from both tournament games and sparring games are tallied throughout the season, and the player with the best W-L record (by percentage) earns the first place vote, the runner up earns the second place vote, and the player with the most losses earns the third vote. A minimum of 12 games (2 per week) is required for a player to be eligible for this final vote.

All votes are officially recorded on the campaign map by the TO running the campaign. At the end of the campaign, these maps are returned to FFG with the “decision” their playgroup arrived at for each of the storylines. These decisions will be recorded along with the decisions that were made by other stores and playgroups, and after all five seasons are over, the results for each campaign will be tabulated by FFG and applied to the future design of the game.

