BLOODLINES
FEALTY & RUIN
RENAISSANCE

# A guide for new lineages

## Welcome! Start here

Each season, every player issues orders and the world resolves them simultaneously. Travel, construction, messages and agreements all take time. While an order is shown in gold, you may still change it; afterwards, you must face the consequences. Armies, messengers and information physically cross the world. Everything unfolds slowly. There are no reputation bars: your actions and your relationships with other players shape your future.

## Specialise!

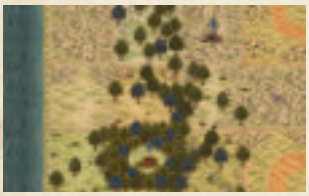
You improve by investing, building and sustaining your activity. Specialisations are expansive: the further you advance, the more they cost to maintain. The game does not force you down a single path. You may become a versatile ruler who does a little of everything, or a great specialist who depends on other houses. Nothing is permanent: across generations, a military lineage can become an agricultural one. But you cannot excel at everything at once.

### FARMER



Cultivate four plots in a 2 x 2 square to establish a farmstead. Repeat the process by grouping four farmsteads in a 4 x 4 block and build a mill. Link two mills and 32 connected plots to create a farming settlement; link two settlements and 64 plots to found a great estate. Spread these structures throughout the world and become the foremost farmer of your age.

### EXTRACTOR



To obtain materials, prospect in the mountains and open a mine when you discover a vein. Every deposit is finite: maintain several mines and seek new sites before they run dry. For timber, build a sawmill at the centre of a 3 x 3 woodland area. With eight forest plots and another sawmill connected along one side, it becomes a great sawmill and improves the entire connected structure by 25%.

### MERCHANT



Your trade network always begins at your capital. Open agencies in connected cities and form a chain to reach more distant markets. Improve both ends of each link: a great agency yields little if the agency at the other end remains small. To trade in another ruler's city, you need the owner's permission. If a route is severed, isolated agencies stop producing.

### MILITARY



Recruit troops in your own cities or those of other rulers. Combine infantry and tactical movement to hold the line, arquebusiers for support, cannon for bombardment and cavalry for manoeuvre. Keeping forces supplied, experienced and active in battle develops your military specialisation. They consume food automatically; without it, they lose effectiveness and soldiers. Remember that troops age and eventually retire.

### SPY



Create spy networks against known lineages and send them wealth so they can operate. Agents need time to arrive, investigate and return with reports. A network provides neither continuous vision nor a guarantee of finding what you seek. Use counter-espionage in your cities to watch for hostile networks. Developing several strong networks and protecting your own lands improves your intelligence specialisation.

## Maps and information

The political map shows what your lineage knows: borders, relationships and last known positions. Its information may be out of date. The tactical map shows what your forces can currently see within a fief. Use it to move armies, cultivate land, build and attack. If something does not appear, that does not mean it is absent: always check the date and source of the information.

## Movement

Select one or more armies on the tactical map and mark their destination. On the march they move faster but fight less effectively. In formation they advance more slowly but are better prepared. Roads speed movement; difficult terrain, fords and bridges slow it down. The route shown is only a forecast: enemies, blockades and other movements may change it. Be careful near forests and villages - you never know who may be hiding in the foliage or waiting behind cover.

## Combat

Order an attack so that your army closes with the enemy. On contact, both forces stop moving; if they remain engaged, casualties begin in the following season. Position, terrain, formation, supply and composition matter as much as numbers. Strike from a forest or outflank the enemy. You can reinforce the front, hold your position or withdraw while accepting some losses.

## Conquest

To conquer a fief, attack its control centre, destroy its defences and physically occupy the position. Entering the territory or destroying the centre is not enough: the fief belongs to whoever succeeds in occupying it. Cannon can bombard a position, but they cannot conquer it on their own.

## Messages and agreements

Messages, proposals and replies travel between houses and may take several seasons. An agreement can include resources, territory, permissions, vassalage or tribute. Proposing is not accepting, and accepting is not fulfilling. Each party must carry out its own clauses. Permissions allow cultivation, extraction or trade in the agreed fiefs, but they do not transfer ownership of the land: that must be offered explicitly.

## Vassalage and realms

A vassal keeps their fiefs, armies and decisions, but grants part of their territorial income to their liege. Changing liege or declaring independence also carries with you any vassals who depend on you. Alliances belong to realms and are agreed by their sovereigns. They make cooperation easier, but do not allow control of another ruler's troops or prevent a vassal from attacking an allied realm. Such an attack does not break the alliance unless it is carried out by a sovereign.

## Lineage and succession

You govern a house, not a single character. Your lineage continues when its ruler dies if a suitable adult successor exists. Place your heirs carefully: they may administer fiefs or accompany armies, but they can also die. Losing your lands does not end the game; dying without a successor does.