

A ♦ S ♦ H ♦ E ♦ S ASCENDANCY



PvP
QUICK START GUIDE

WELCOME TO ASHES

This guide serves as the introduction for the Phoenixborn vs Phoenixborn (PvP) game mode for Ashes. Cast spells, call for aid from your allies, summon conjurations, then clash in a fast-paced battle to the death! Declare victory by placing wound tokens on your opponent's Phoenixborn equal to its life value!

CHOOSE YOUR DECK

Start by choosing who will play which deck:

Arren Frostpeak

Arren Frostpeak uses astral magic and specializes in hunting down enemy threats with precision, as well as disrupting their ability to cast their spells at the right time.

Arren will teach you the fundamentals of combat.



Issa Brightmore

Issa Brightmore uses artifice magic and excels in building elaborate engines, distributing charges to the right sources at the right time to make huge power plays.

Issa will teach you the importance of sequencing your actions for maximum effect.



Arren and Issa's preconstructed deck lists can be found on page 26 of the Comprehensive Rulebook.

PREPARE YOUR DECK

1. Place your Phoenixborn into play.
2. Make a conjunction pile out of each deck's black-backed conjunction cards.
3. Retrieve the following cards from each deck. These cards make up your First Five. In every game of Ashes, you get to choose 5 different cards to be your starting hand.
 - ♦ **Arren:** Summon Stellar Oracle, Summon Frost Talon, Whirlwind, Skybreak Captain, Javelineer.
 - ♦ **Issa:** Summon Thunder Hulk, Summon Spark Drone, Supercharge, Recharge, Core Supplier.
4. Shuffle the remaining cards to form your draw pile.



ROLL YOUR DICE

Place your dice reference card into your play area. Each player then rolls their 10 dice, creating their active pool.



Know Your Dice

Dice each have three types of faces, ranked in a hierarchy of power level.

	Power symbol	Class symbol	Basic symbol
Astral die			
Artifice die			

Class dice can be spent as basic; power dice can be spent as class or basic. You can see these magic costs written on the cards in your First Five, along with a handful of other cost icons.

First Player

Whoever rolls more basic symbols gets to choose who the first player will be. For this teaching game, let's have Issa take the first turn, passing her the first player token.



TAKE YOUR TURNS

Ashes is played over multiple rounds, with each round containing back and forth turns.

Each turn is short, consisting of players taking a Main action and an optional Side action (in either order). This quick start guide will lead you through the first round of a game.

Main Actions (required)

- ◇ Pay a ⚙ cost
- ◇ Attack
- ◇ Pass

Side Actions (optional)

- ◇ Pay a ♠ cost
- ◇ Activate a dice power
- ◇ Meditate

TURN 1 - ISSA

Issa looks at her hand and sees a variety of Main action costs  in the top right corner of her cards.

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Issa starts by using her main action to put Summon Thunder Hulk into play.

This card is called a Ready Spell **1**. It is played onto your Spellboard **2**. Each Phoenixborn has a spellboard limit, which tells you how many different ready spells you can have in play. If you play another copy of a ready spell you already control, they share the same spellboard slot.



Now that Summon Thunder Hulk is in play, on future turns, Issa can activate this spell **3** to start getting some units onto the battlefield!



Side Action: Pay a Cost

Issa can also take a Side action on her turn. Issa sees a Side action cost  on her ready spell Supercharge. She spends her side action and one class die from her active pool to put Supercharge onto her spellboard.



End of Turn

After taking both a Main and a Side action, your turn ends.

TURN 2 - ARREN

Arren decides to try and take the initiative, and wants to do so by playing an ally into play this turn. He plans to play Skybreak Captain, which will cost a main action and 3 dice: a power, a class, and a basic die.



You may have rolled the dice you need to play the Captain, but what if you didn't? You can use your Side action to Meditate.

Side Action: Meditate

When Meditating, you can discard any number of cards from the top of your draw pile, your hand, and your spellboard. Each time you Meditate a card you can change a die in your active pool to a side of your choice. This is a great way to get those power dice you need to play your more powerful cards, like Skybreak Captain.

Arren decides to Meditate 2 cards off the top of his deck, changing 2 basic dice to their power sides.



Main Action: Pay a Cost

Now, Arren can use his Main action to play Skybreak Captain. He also moves a power, class, and basic die from his active pool to his exhausted pool to pay the play cost of this ally.



Allies **1** are a type of unit that are played onto your Battlefield **2**. Units can engage in battle with other units and Phoenixborn, dealing damage equal to their attack value **3** to the cards they are in battle with. Each Phoenixborn has a battlefield value, indicating how many units they can have in play at any given time.



Units are the beating heart of Ashes gameplay, so be sure to use your magic to maintain a steady supply of units on your battlefield!

Skybreak Captain also has an ability, Uplift.

Uplift: When this unit comes into play, place an astral die from your exhausted pool on it.

This ability triggers when Skybreak Captain comes into play, so Arren places an astral die on that Skybreak Captain now. Astral dice placed on units and Phoenixborn grant them the dice power effect listed on the astral dice magic reference card, giving the Skybreak Captain some additional protection.

TURN 3 - ISSA

Issa is concerned about the powerful Skybreak Captain that just entered play, and decides to put up some defense.

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Issa activates Summon Thunder Hulk, spending a Main action, a class die, and a basic die **1**. This spell also shows an Exhaust icon in its activation cost, which means Issa must place an exhaustion token onto Summon Thunder Hulk **2**.



Now that the costs have been paid, resolve Summon Thunder Hulk's effect, placing a Thunder Hulk conjuration from Issa's conjuration pile onto her battlefield **3**.



Note: As a conjuration, if Thunder Hulk is destroyed, it returns to Issa's conjuration pile.

Side Action: None

If Issa didn't have the right dice to pay to activate Summon Thunder Hulk, she could have first taken a Meditate action. Otherwise, she takes no Side action.



TURN 4 - ARREN

Arren wants to continue with his aggressive strategy and decides to take an Attack main action.

Main Action: Attack

When taking an Attack action, Arren first must choose a target of the attack, either an opponent's unit or their Phoenixborn. Arren decides to target the Thunder Hulk **1**.

When attacking a unit, you may only declare one unit as an attacker, and it must be unexhausted. Arren declares Skybreak Captain as the attacker **2**.

As the defending player, Issa now has a choice on how the battle will go. She can allow Skybreak Captain to hit its mark and battle with the Thunder Hulk, or she can intervene

by declaring herself as a guard against the attack. Not eager to lose her Thunder Hulk so soon, Issa is declared as a guard **3**. When a Phoenixborn guards, rotate it 90° to indicate it has guarded this round. A Phoenixborn can only guard once per round.

Skybreak Captain and Issa are now in battle. Skybreak Captain deals damage to Issa equal to its attack value. Phoenixborn do not deal damage when in battle. 3 wound tokens are placed on Issa as a result of the damage received by the attack **4**. Skybreak Captain receives 1 exhaustion token as a result of attacking, indicating it cannot be used again this round **5**.

Side Action: None

Arren decides to take no Side action.



TURN 5 - ISSA

Issa is looking to prepare a large-scale attack.

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Issa decides to play Core Supplier to the battlefield. She spends her Main action and the appropriate dice to do so.



When Core Supplier comes into play, its Supply 2 ability allows Issa to place 2 artificie dice from her exhausted pool onto cards she controls. The artificie dice magic reference card details how artificie dice work; they charge up the cards they are placed on to unlock their full potential! Issa chooses to place one artificie die on Thunder Hulk to allow it to attack (due to its Dormant ability) and places the other artificie die on Supercharge to enable a powerful buff to a unit's attack value.



TURN 6 - ARREN

Arren is now staring down two units ready to attack him and decides he ought to prepare some kind of defense.

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Arren uses his Main action to play Javelineer onto the battlefield.



Side Action: Dice Power

It is time to ascend! Arren activates his Phoenixborn ability, spending his side action, a class die, and exhausting himself. Ascend allows Arren to place an astral die onto himself, granting him some protection, as well as dealing 1 damage to a target unit an opponent controls. Arren chooses to soften up Issa's Core Supplier, dealing 1 damage to it.

Ascend:      Deal 1 damage to a target unit an opponent controls. Place an astral die from your exhausted pool onto this Phoenixborn.



TURN 7 - ISSA

It is time for Issa to go on the offensive!

Side Action: Pay a ✧ Cost

Issa begins by activating Supercharge, increasing the attack value of her Thunder Hulk by 2 for the remainder of the turn.

✧ ✧ : If this spell is charged, add 2 to the attack value of a target unit for the remainder of the turn.

Main Action: Attack

Then for her Main action, Issa chooses to Attack. Since Issa has 2 unexhausted units, she decides to attack with both of them by targeting Arren for the attack. When attacking a Phoenixborn, any number of unexhausted units can be declared as attackers.

Arren now has the opportunity to declare blockers against the two attacking units.

Only his Javelineer can block, because Skybreak Captain is exhausted. Not eager to take 5 damage from the buffed Thunder Hulk, Arren declares the Javelineer as a blocker against Thunder Hulk. Core Supplier is unblocked.

Issa can choose to resolve these two battles in the order of her choice. First she deals damage with the Core Supplier, dealing 2 damage to Arren. However, the astral die on Arren prevents 1 damage from being received, and then returns to the exhausted pool. 1 wound token is placed on Arren **1**, and 1 exhaustion token is placed on Core Supplier **2**.

The next battle is between Thunder Hulk and Javelineer. When units are in battle, they deal damage to each other simultaneously. Thunder Hulk deals 5 damage to the Javelineer **3**, and Javelineer counters, dealing 1 damage to Thunder Hulk **4**. Javelineer has received enough wounds to be destroyed, which triggers Thunder Hulk's Overkill 1 ability! An additional 1 damage is dealt to Arren as a result **5**.

Target! Arren Frostbreak (Attack 3, Life 3)

Blocker! Skybreak Captain (Attack 1, Life 1) - Exhausted

Blocker! Javelineer (Attack 1, Life 1)

Attacker! Thunder Hulk (Attack 5, Life 3) - Supercharged

Attacker! Core Supplier (Attack 2, Life 2)

Attacker! Thunder Hulk (Attack 4, Life 3)

Attacker! Core Supplier (Attack 2, Life 1) - Exhausted

TURN 8 - ARREN

After taking quite the hit, Arren needs to rebuild his battlefield.

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Arren places Summon Stellar Oracle onto his spellboard with his Main action **1**.

Side Action: Pay a Cost

For his Side action, Arren plays Whirlwind onto his spellboard **2**.



TURN 9 - ISSA

Issa also decides it's time to build back up.

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Issa plays Summon Spark Drone onto her spellboard for her Main action **3**.

Side Action: Pay a Cost

Issa uses her Phoenixborn ability for her Side action **4**. Inspiration allows her to place an artifice die onto Summon Spark Drone **5**, as well as draw 2 cards.

Inspiration:     Place an artifice die from your



TURN 12 - ARREN

Side Action: Dice Power

Arren decides to use the astral dice power, spending 1 power die and placing it on himself for more protection **1**.

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Now that he has an astral die on him, he activates the Whirlwind ready spell for his Main action. He lowers 2 dice in Issa's active pool one level (power to class, and class to basic) and also gets to draw a card.



TURN 13 - ISSA

Main Action: Pay a Cost

Not to be outdone by some dice lowering tricks, Issa activates Summon Spark Drone for her main action, paying its costs.



In addition to placing a Spark Drone onto her battlefield **2**, she also gets to change 2 dice in her active pool to a side of her choice, powering them right back up to their power sides **3**!



TURN 14 - ARREN

Main Action: Attack

Arren makes a desperate move in an effort to teach new rules about Ashes to the players. He takes an Attack main action, targeting the Thunder Hulk and declaring his Stellar Oracle as the attacker. Now it's on Issa to choose a guard. Since Issa already guarded this round (and is rotated 90°), she cannot guard this attack! However, the newly summoned Spark Drone has the Unit Guard ability, allowing the Spark Drone to be declared as a guard of the attack. While this is a good option, Issa also decides to teach a new rule to the players, and does not declare Spark Drone as a guard. Instead, she allows the Stellar Oracle to remain attacking its original target, the Thunder Hulk.

Defending units always counter when battling an attacking unit if they were declared as a blocker or guard. In this battle, Thunder Hulk was not declared as a blocker or guard, so instead has the option to simply allow the Stellar Oracle to attack it. Issa makes this choice, and the Stellar Oracle deals 2 damage to the Thunder Hulk. Stellar Oracle becomes exhausted, but is not dealt damage by the Thunder Hulk since it chose not to counter. Furthermore, since Thunder Hulk did not counter, it is not exhausted.

Note: Other Card Types

You may run across alteration spells and reaction spells. See page 14 of the Comprehensive Rulebook to learn how to use those.

Target!



Target!



Attacker!

Attacker!

COMPLETE THE ROUND

At this point, enough rules have been covered for you to play out the rest of this round as you see fit. Eventually, both players will run out of dice, cards, and actions they can take, at which point you will take a Pass main action, which simply does nothing. Once both players take a Pass main action consecutively, the round proceeds to the Recovery Phase.

RECOVERY PHASE

Step 1, Recover: Remove wound tokens from each unit equal to its recover value, if any.

Step 2, Remove Exhaustion: Remove 1 exhaustion token from each card.

Step 3, Exhaust Dice: All dice on cards move to their exhausted pool. Leftover active dice can also be exhausted, but you can choose to keep them if they're good, e.g. power dice.

The round is now over. Pass the first player token to the other player and begin the next round of play, starting with the Prepare Phase.

1. Recover



2. Remove Exhaustion



3. Exhaust Dice



PREPARE PHASE

Step 1, Roll Dice: Each player re-rolls all their dice in their exhausted pool to create their active pool for the round.

Step 2, Discard Cards: Players may discard any cards from their hand they don't want.

Step 3, Draw Cards: Players draw until they have 5 cards in hand.

Players go back to the Player Turns Phase, and continue playing until one Phoenixborn is victorious!



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