

# RODS AND COMMISSARS™



## OBJECTIVE

In *Cogs and Commissars*, you must collect enough Citizens to lead a revolution! That is, you need to amass at least 15 points worth of Citizen tokens, then play your *Revolution* card without it being countered. If you do that, you win!

## COMPONENTS

192 Cards:

- 180 Play Cards
- 6 Faction Leader Cards
- 6 Reference Cards

84 Citizen Tokens:

- 51 Proletariat (1 point)
- 18 Bourgeoisie (2 points)
- 15 Commissar (3 points)



Proletariat      Bourgeoisie      Commissar  
(1 pt)                (2 pts)                (3 pts)

Different kinds of Citizens can't be exchanged.  
Three Proletariats are worth the same as a Commissar, but you can't "make change" to convert them.



Play cards have art, a border, and a number of icons.



Reference card



Faction Leader cards  
Each has a corresponding deck with matching faction icon.



## SETUP

### 1. Choose Your Faction Leader (Optional):

*Cogs and Commissars* can be played with or without Faction Leaders.

- To play with Leaders, players choose or randomly deal out one Faction Leader card to each player. These stay in front of you and do not get shuffled into the deck.
- To play without Faction Leaders, put all of the Leader cards back in the box. Unless you have the blessing of the central committee, you should probably play your first game without Leaders.

### 2. Build Your Deck:

There are three options for building decks. Each provides a different experience. Continue reading for more information on each, and follow those instructions now.

- Preconstructed Decks (see below)
- Drafted Decks (see next page)
- Random Decks (see next page)

### 3. Take Your Ration:

Each player takes two Proletariat [★] tokens.

### 4. Populate the Gulag:

Put the rest of the Citizen tokens in the center of the table. This "bank" is called the Gulag.

### 5. Draw Your Starting Hand:

Everyone shuffles their deck and draws a hand of seven cards.

### 6. Appoint a First Player:

The player who has most recently consumed mainstream news media goes first. In subsequent games, the player with the least amount of Citizens at the end of the previous game goes first.

## PRECONSTRUCTED DECKS

*Cogs and Commissars* has six preconstructed 30-card decks, each with different capabilities and a different flavor. To play this way, separate all play cards using the faction icons. Each player takes a deck. That's it! If you're playing with Faction Leaders, choose the faction deck that matches your Faction Leader card in the obvious way.

## For Your First Game

- Separate cards by faction icon (on the bottom left of each card, see diagram at bottom of this page).
- Give one deck to each player.
- Put unused decks and all Faction Leader cards back in the box.
- Skip to step 3 below. Skip all of page 4 as well.



Function Icon



# THE PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO APPROVED METHODS OF DECK-BUILDING

If you're using preconstructed (faction) decks, you can skip this page.

To use drafted or random decks, give each player a set of core play cards. A set comprises 12 cards: one *Revolution*, seven *Propaganda*, and four *Counter Propaganda*. These should be in every deck, every game.



Core play cards are darker under the title.



Regular play cards are darker at the bottom.

## DRAFTED DECKS

*Cogs and Commissars* is huge fun when players draft decks according to their most devious strategies. To draft decks...

1. Shuffle the regular play cards and deal eight random, face-down cards to each player. These cards join the players' 12 core play cards. Players can look at these, but then set them aside to prepare for the draft.
2. Deal another 10 cards to each player. These will be used to draft.
3. Each player looks at their 10 cards, chooses one to keep, and then passes the remaining nine cards to the player on their left.
4. Step 3 is repeated — from a set of one fewer card in each iteration — until there are no cards left to pass.
5. Each player shuffles their core cards, random cards, and drafted cards into a deck of 30 cards.

## RANDOM DECKS

For a thoroughly non-five-year-planned experience, shuffle the regular play cards and deal 18 random cards to each player. Each player shuffles them with their core cards to form a 30-card deck.

## ORGANIZING THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION

In *Cogs and Commissars*, everyone has their own deck and discard pile. Cards never move between decks during play. Your cards will all go into your own discard pile, never an opponent's. Discard piles are public information, so feel free to look through your own or an opponent's.

Everyone also has their own pool of Citizen tokens that represent their score. Tokens are not interchangeable. For example, while three Proletariats have the same value as one Commissar, you can't arbitrarily exchange them for each other. For maximum gameplay efficiency, arrange Citizen tokens in rows worth five points each.



Each player has a Faction Leader card, a deck, a discard pile, and Citizen tokens arranged in rows of five points.

## TAKING TURNS

*Cogs and Commissars* is played in turns, starting with the first player. Turns continue around the table until someone wins.

1. **Produce Two Citizens:** Flip the top two cards of your deck into your discard pile. Take a Citizen from the Gulag of the type(s) indicated by the production icons [stars] they show. Ignore everything else on these cards. (Note: *Revolution* is the only card that produces more than one token by itself.)
2. **Discard / Draw:** Discard any number of cards (including zero) from your hand, then draw back up to seven. If you have more than seven cards, you must discard down to seven. If you have to draw and your deck is empty, shuffle your discard pile to make a new deck.
3. **Propaganda:** Play any number of *Propaganda* cards, one at a time.
4. **Action:** Play one Action card [⚙️] or none.

Each player completes all turn phases (that they are able), in order, before play passes clockwise to the next player.



Action Card Icon



Production Icon



## BLITZ CARDS

Any player can play any amount of Blitz cards ( ) at any time, including during other players' turns or in between the steps of their own turn.

After any card is played, all players have the opportunity to respond to that card with a Blitz. Blitz cards are resolved first in, last out. That is, responding cards are always resolved before instigating cards.



## BLITZ CARD TIMING EXAMPLE

- Anastasia has 15 points worth of Citizens and plays *Revolution* ().
- Boris responds by playing *Stifle Free Speech* ( ) to counter it.
- Anastasia responds with another *Stifle Free Speech* ( ) to counter the counter.
- Boris plays *Assassinate* as a Blitz and targets one of Anastasia's Commissars. Her *Revolution* will not resolve unless she has at least 15 points worth of Citizens.
- Not wanting her *Revolution* to be foiled, Anastasia responds by playing *Doublethink* ( ) and draws two cards: *Military Action* ( ) and *Our Glorious Leader* (). She uses *Military Action* to gain an additional Action, allowing her to play *Our Glorious Leader* and gain a Commissar, returning her to 15 points of Citizens.
- No more responses are played, so Anastasia's *Revolution* succeeds and she wins.

Note that this entire example takes place during the Action phase of Anastasia's turn. Her Action card is *Revolution*. All other cards played are either Blitz cards, acting as a Blitz card (*Assassinate*), or a bonus Action (thanks to *Military Action*).

## WINNING THE GAME

When you have at least 15 points of Citizens, you can play your *Revolution* card. If you are successful, you win! But be alert! Other players can counter your *Revolution*, such as with *Stifle Free Speech*. They might also be able to send enough of your Citizens to the Gulag to reduce your score below 15. Even more subversive strategies to stop your *Revolution* also exist, so never let your (Red) Guard down!

## GLOSSARY

**The Gulag:** The area in the center of the table where Citizens come from, and where they go when they're eliminated.

**Produce Citizens:** The process of flipping a card from your deck to your discard pile to gain a Citizen of the type indicated by its star icon (). This cannot be countered, and is not considered playing a card.

## FAQS ABOUT CARDS

**Androidopov (Faction Leader):** Your hand size is determined by the number of *Counter Propaganda* cards in your discard pile when your discard/draw phase begins. So if you have to shuffle during your discard/draw phase, you do not have to discard back down.

**Control the News Media:** You cannot reshuffle your discard pile to play this card.

**Define the Truth:** You may use this card on *Enforce Equality* after the person playing it has chosen a Citizen type. It does not work on Producing Citizens.

**Doublespeak:** *Doublespeak* duplicates a card, so that card's effects are doubled, or take place twice. A duplicated *Revolution* must be countered twice to prevent that player from winning. The owner of the duplicate is the same player that played the original card, and may choose new targets for the duplicated card.

**Encourage Dissent:** Everyone chooses which cards to discard from their own hand.

**Hire Assassin:** If you sacrifice a Proletariat to play *Hire Assassin* as a Blitz, that Proletariat goes to the Gulag before the card is played, and remains there even if the card is countered. You do not sacrifice again if *Hire Assassin* is doubled with *Doublespeak*.

**Intercept Transmission:** The card you select and play when using *Intercept Transmission* may be an Action card, even though you used your action by playing *Intercept Transmission*. The card you play goes into the discard pile of the player whose hand it came from.

**Prove by Assertion:** You may not retrieve another copy of *Prove by Assertion*.

**Seize the Gears:** *Seize the Gears* can be countered by *Stifle Free Speech*.

**Stifle Free Speech:** The only cards this cannot be played against are: *Disarm the Citizens*, cards following *Disarm the Citizens*, and *Revolution* cards played by a player with 20 points of Citizens or more. A countered card goes into the discard pile of whoever played it, not back into their hand.

**Upload Red Error:** If you cannot do this, there is no penalty.

# REFERENCE

During your turn, in order:

- 1. Produce 2 Citizens:** Flip the top **2** cards of your deck, gain Citizens indicated by the star color.
- 2. Discard/Draw:** Discard any or all cards, then draw back up to **7**.
- 3. Propaganda:** Play any/all *Propaganda* cards.
- 4. Action:** Play **1** Action card [●].

Play **Blitz** cards [●] at any time, as many as you want, before or during any phase of your turn, or during an opponent's turn.

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Have **15** points in Citizens and play your *Revolution* card to win.  
If you have **20** points in Citizens, your *Revolution* cannot be countered.



Proletariat  
(1 pt)

Bourgeoisie  
(2 pts)

Commissar  
(3 pts)



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