

Tom Lehmann

Res Arcana

DUO

Rules

In a Renaissance of magic and alchemy, mages wield Life and Death;
Elan, the essence of earth, fire, and inner vitality; and Calm,
the essence of wind and water.

As an alchemical mage, will you seek mystic dominance over
Places of Power? Or will you pursue secular influence by transforming
essences into Gold and taking control of ancient monuments?



3



Two alchemical mages face each other. Who will control the places of power and ancient monuments that they vie for? Starting with just five essences, which mage will best use their artifacts, powers, and magic items to earn 10 points and win?

Welcome to **Res Arcana Duo**, a complete game for 2 players.

Res Arcana Duo can also be combined with the **Res Arcana** base game and any of its expansions, such as **Lux et Tenebrae** or **Perlae Imperii** (see page 11).

Contents

16 Artifact cards



4 Mage cards



7 Monument cards



2 Places of Power (double-sided)



2 reference cards



Summary card



5 Magic items



4 "5x" essence chips



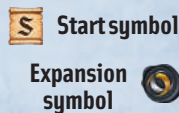
60 essence tokens (12 of each)



First Player token



Expansion symbol



Setup

1. Put the 5 magic items, tray of essences, and 5x essence chips in the center to form the supply.
2. Next to them, set out both Places of Power.
First Game: use their ☀️ sides.
Later Games: for each Place of Power, randomly select which side to use.
3. Shuffle the 7 monuments. Set out 2 of them face up and form a draw pile with the rest.
4. Give 1 of each essence (including Gold) to each player, to form their initial essence pools.
5. Select a First Player, who takes the First Player token.
6. Shuffle the mages and artifacts separately. Deal 2 mages and 8 artifacts to each player. Examine your mages but do *not* look at all the dealt artifacts.
Draw 2 artifacts, look at them, keep 1 for yourself

and set 1 aside face down for your rival. Do this 4 times. When both players are done, examine the 4 cards you kept and the 4 cards your rival gave you, and then shuffle them to form your *personal* deck.

Draw 3 cards for your initial hand. Players then choose their mage, place and reveal them, and return the unused mages to the box.

First Game: Separate and shuffle the 2 mages and 6 artifacts with start (S) symbols. Deal 1 mage to each player, which begins in play. Deal 3 artifacts to each player to form their initial hand (which they can examine). Shuffle the other 10 artifacts and deal 5 face down to each player to form their *personal* decks.

7. The *second* player chooses 1 magic item. The First Player then chooses 1 magic item and begins play.



Components

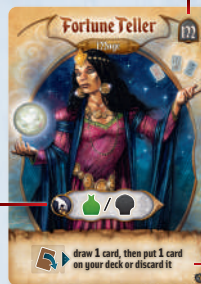
Res Arcana is a game of fantastical alchemy. Use your mage, magic item selections, starting essences, and cards to score at least 10 and the most victory points by placing artifacts, monuments, and places of power.

First Game: Play to **7+**, not 10+, victory points.

A **component** is an artifact, mage, magic item, monument, or Place of Power.

Mage

Mage



Collect ability

Item



powers

Place of Power



cost

collect ability

powers

Monument

Monument

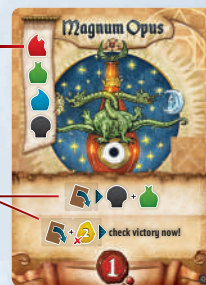


cost

victory points

Artifact

placement cost



powers

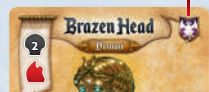
Creature



Dragon



Demon



The demon type is not used by any Duo power. It is for compatibility with the Lux et Tenebrae expansion.

Play

A game typically lasts 4-6 rounds. Each round consists of 3 parts:

1 Collect essences:

- ◆ do any Collect  abilities, and
- ◆ may take essences from components.

2 Do actions, 1 per turn, alternating from the First Player:

- ◆ place an artifact,
- ◆ claim a monument or Place of Power,
- ◆ discard a card for 1 Gold or any 2 other essences,
- ◆ use a power on a straightened component, or
- ◆ pass: exchange magic items and draw 1 card.

Continue doing actions until both players have passed.

Pass procedure:

- a. if you are first to pass, take the First Player token,
- b. swap your magic item for a different magic item,
- c. draw 1 card.

3 Check victory (7+ or 10+ VPs).

If no one has won:

- ◆ straighten all turned components, and
- ◆ begin the next round.

1. Collect

Each player does their Collect abilities and/or takes essences from their components (in any order).

For each Collect ability  on your components, take from the supply the essences shown and add them to your essence pool:

- ◆ If an essence has a number, take that number of that essence from the supply; otherwise, take 1.
- ◆ If "+" separate the essences, take all of them.
- ◆ If "/" separate the essences, choose 1 of them.
- ◆ If a number of  is listed, choose any mix of essences that equal that number, subject to any restrictions after this symbol, such as ( ): no Gold or Death.

Players may also take any essences on their components during this step.

You may take essences off some components and not others, but if you take any essences off a given component, you must take all of them.

Fine Points

The essences supplied are not a limit. As needed, put an essence on a "5x" essence chip to be 5 essences of that color. You may make change at any time.

You may take all the essences from a Place of Power (but doing so will result in a loss of victory points).

Players usually collect their essences simultaneously, but may request that this step be done in player order, starting with the First Player.



2. Actions

Starting with the First Player, players alternate doing 1 action until both players have passed. A player who passes cannot later do an action.

Actions

- **Place an artifact** from your hand in front of you, paying its cost.
- **Claim a monument or Place of Power** from the center, placing it in front of you and paying its cost. As all monuments cost 4 Gold, you may claim either one of the two monuments on display or the top card of the monument deck. If you claim a monument on display, replace it with the top card from the monument deck (if possible).
- **Discard an artifact** from your hand to gain 1 Gold or any 2 other essences (the same or different).

Tuck a discarded artifact sideways, face up, under your artifact deck (to distinguish your discards from your turned artifacts). Your discards may be inspected by your rival.



Tip: Do not try to place all of your artifacts. Instead, discard some of them to gain the essences needed to place the others.

- **Use a power** on one of your straightened components, see page 7. Unlike abilities, powers on turned components cannot be used.
- **Pass**, ending your actions for the round, see page 8.

Cost

A component's placement cost is shown in its upper left corner. Pay the essences shown to the supply.



If an essence has a number, pay that number of that essence from your essence pool to the supply; otherwise, pay 1.

If the essence is , pay any essence. If it lists a number, such as , pay any mix of essences equal to that number.

All placed or claimed components begin play straightened.

Fine Points

The Robes of the Artificer has a discount ability that reduces the cost to place any artifact.

This ability can be combined with the discount from the Crucible's second power.

A cost reduced below 0 becomes 0.



Powers

Many components list 1 or 2 powers. Powers have a cost and an effect, separated by a triangle.



Turn this component + pay 1 Life ➤ Take 1 Elan + 1 Death

To use a power, pay its cost (putting any essences spent in the supply) and apply its effect (taking any essences gained from the supply).

A power's cost often consists of several parts, separated by "+"s. You must pay all of its cost to use a power.

A power may require turning its component sideways as part (or all) of its cost. Once a component is turned, unlike abilities, you may not use its powers until it is straightened.



A power whose cost does not involve turning its component can be used multiple times in a round, but each use of that power is a separate action.

Many effects direct you to put the gained essences on the component, instead of in your essence pool, to be collected at the start of a future round or to become victory points on a Place of Power.



Fine Points

Some effects provide a number of  essences. Choose any mix of essences equal to that number, subject to any restrictions, such as (  ): no Gold or Life.

A power can be used (paying its cost) that has no effect.

Some effects direct you to draw a card. If you have no cards in your deck *and* you need to draw, reshuffle your discards to form a new deck.

Some effects (Brazen Head) direct you to draw 3 cards from a deck. If there are fewer than 3 cards in that deck (after reshuffling, if it is your artifact deck), draw them all, and then put back that number of cards.

Some effects direct you to *retrieve* a card, taking a card from your discard pile into your hand. If you have no cards in your discard pile, retrieve has no effect.

Draw and retrieve powers cannot be used on your rival's deck or discard pile.

When you discard to pay a cost (Elvish Heartland) or as part of an effect (Fortune Teller) you do not gain 1 Gold or any 2 other essences (as you are not doing the discard-an-artifact action).

Some powers' costs (e.g. Dragon Cave, Druid Circle, Mystic Font, Sleeping Dragon) require turning a different component, such as a Creature, Dragon, or your Mage, either instead of or in addition to turning that power's component. Doing this does not activate any powers of the Creature, Dragon, or Mage being turned.



Some effects (e.g. Black Cat, Mystic Monastery, Reanimate, Solomon's Key) enable you to straighten either any of your turned components or your mage, making their powers available again.



Component Power Fine Points



Cultist: its power directs your rival to gain a Death essence (from the supply). If your rival has already passed, they still gain it.

Crown of Command: its powers each gain a monument (from the supply). You may take either face up one or the top one from the monument deck.

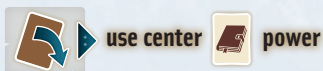
Fortune Teller: the card you discard or put back can be but is not required to be the card you drew.

Gold Key: the “player” could be you or your rival.



Mystic Font: the option to gain a Pearl from its first power’s effect applies only when playing with the *Perlae Imperii* expansion (which adds Pearls).

Silver Key: in *Res Arcana* games with 3+ players, you would choose which “one rival” this effect applies to.



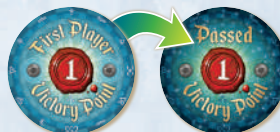
Solomon’s Key: its first power applies to magic items in the center area but cannot be used on either the Death/Life or Calm/Elan potions (as they do not have powers, only Collect *abilities*).



Squared Circle: its power places any essence from its owner’s pool on one of their components. (Typically, this is used to place an essence on a Place of Power that scores for it.) The component that the essence is placed on may already be turned.

Passing

A player who cannot or does not wish to do an action must pass.



If you are the first to pass in a round, take the First Player token – worth 1 point when checking victory – and flip it over to its Passed side.



Swap your magic item for a different one in the supply, flipping the new magic item over to its Passed side.

Then, draw 1 card (if possible). If you have no cards in your deck, reshuffle your discards to form a new deck.

Once a player passes, that player cannot do more actions that round, but can still gain essences from their rival’s powers.

3. Victory

After both players have passed, check if either player has 10 or more points from their placed artifacts, monuments, Places of Power, and the First Player token.

If at least one player has 10+ points, the game is over and the player with the most points wins!

If both players are tied at 10+ points, then the player with the most essences in their essence pool, with Gold essences counting double, wins. If both players are still tied, they share their victory.

If neither player has 10+ points, straighten all turned components, flip over the First Player token and magic items from their Passed sides, and begin the next round.

First Game: Play to 7+, not 10+, victory points.

Fine Points

Count all Place of Power victory abilities and victory points on turned components when checking victory.

The Places of Power Dwarven Forge and Elvish Heartwood each provide 1 point in addition to their points for the essences on them.

The First Player token provides 1 point for the player who holds it when checking victory.

A player who has claimed the Stone Circle monument or placed the Magnum Opus artifact may use its power to check victory in the middle of a round. Typically, a player does this to win once they have 10+ points and are ahead, before their rival gains more points.

Glossary

Ability: a Collect effect, placement discount, or victory formula on a component that automatically applies (when appropriate) whether or not that component is turned.

Artifact types: Creatures, Dragons, and Demons. Mages, magic items, monuments, and Places of Power are not artifacts.

Component: an artifact, mage, magic item, monument, or Place of Power.

Cost: the cost in essences from a player's essence pool to place an artifact, claim a monument or Place of Power, or use a power.

Discount: a reduction in the number of essences needed to place an artifact. Discounts cannot reduce a cost below zero.

Essence: Calm, Death, Elan, Gold, or Life.

Essence Pool: essences a player has, not on their components, that they can spend to pay costs.

Power: a cost and an effect on a component. Using a power requires its component be straightened (not turned sideways), takes an action, and involves paying its cost and applying its effect. A power may be used for no effect (typically, to avoid passing) provided its cost is fully paid.

Rival: your opponent (not you).

Straighten: to turn a sideways component straight, ready to be used again.

Turn: to turn a component sideways as part of a power's cost.

Sample Round

Anne and Bob are playing their **First Game** of *Res Arcana Duo*, using the start mages and artifacts marked with . Bob is First Player and was dealt the Smith mage and Crucible, Cursed Peacock Idol, and Squared Circle artifacts. Anne has the Enchantress mage and the White Swan, Cnosis, and Solomon's Key artifacts.

Places of Power: Druid Circle, Dwarven Forge.

Face up monuments: Dark Temple, Mystic Monastery.

Setup the game (see page 3) and play along!

Bob examines his cards, sees the Mystic Monastery, and decides to try a monument strategy. Anne looks at her cards and sees that the White Swan can both grow her essences and is a Creature and decides to aim for the Druid Circle Place of Power.

As second player, Anne selects her magic item first and takes Research. Bob takes the Calm/Elan potion.

Collect : Anne takes 1 Calm (Enchantress) and Bob chooses to take 1 Elan (from the potion).

Actions

1. Bob places the Crucible for 1 Gold and 1 Elan.



1. Anne turns Research, spend 1 Death, and draws Magnum Opus from her deck.



2. Bob turns the Crucible, spending 1 Elan, 1 Calm, 1 Death, and 1 Life for 3 Gold.
2. Anne places the White Swan for 2 Calm and 1 Life.
3. Bob discards any card for 2 Elan.

3. Anne discards any card for 2 Calm.



4. Bob turns the Smith, spending 1 Elan for 1 Gold.
4. Anne discards any card for 1 Calm and 1 Life.
5. Bob spends 4 Gold for the face up Mystic Monastery monument, replacing it with the Well of Memory.
5. Anne discards her last card for 1 Calm and 1 Life.



6. Bob turns the Monastery to straighten his Smith.



6. Anne spends Calm+Life to put 1 Calm and 2 Life on the White Swan.
7. Bob discards his last card for 1 Gold.
7. Anne spends Calm+Life to put another Calm and 2 more Life on the White Swan.



8. Bob turns the Smith, using its other power to spend 1 Gold to put any mix of 4 non-gold essences on it. Bob chooses to make these essences 4 Elan.
8. Anne spends Calm+Gold to put another Calm and 2 Life on the White Swan.
9. Bob has 1 Elan in his essence pool, no cards in hand, and all his components are turned. He must pass. He is first to pass, so he keeps the Pass token, swaps his Calm/Elan potion for the Life/Death magic item, and then draws a card, the Brazen Head, from his deck.



9. Anne turns the Enchantress and spends 1 Elan to put 2 Death on it.

At this point, Anne could continue to do actions, but her 10th action is to pass, turning in Research for the Calm/Elan potion that Bob returned. She draws a card, the Faerie Dragon, from her deck.

Victory: Bob has 2 VPs from the Monastery and 1 VP for holding the Pass token. Anne has 0 VPs. Neither has 7+ VPs (**First Game** only), so they both straighten their mages and all turned components to begin round 2.

Looking Ahead. Next round, Anne's 9 White Swan essences pay for the Druid Circle. Both its powers can be used for 2 VPs. She can pass first for the Pass token.

In round 3, Anne can place the Faerie Dragon for its VP, and use her Druid Circle powers for 3 more VPs, bringing her to 7 VPs if she can pass first and keep the 1 VP First Player token.

Meanwhile, Bob is capable of buying a monument a turn, but only 1 VP monuments are face up. If he buys blindly from the top of the monument deck, he could get lucky, but might draw the last 1 VP monument.

Should Bob invest in the Brazen Head in round 2 to stack the monument deck? Should Bob aim to pass early in round 3 and force the game to a fourth round?

Finish this game and find out!

Playing to 10+ VPs with a draft is quite different than 7+ VPs with start cards. Once you feel comfortable, try the full game. Enjoy!

What's Next?

If you enjoy *Duo*, try *Res Arcana* (the base game). It adds 2 more players, 10 mages, 40 artifacts, 10 monuments, 5 double-sided Places of Power, and just a few new rules (Life Loss and React powers).

You can merge in all of *Duo's* components, except the *Duo* duplicate Magic items and First Player token.

Expansion Use

In addition to being a stand alone game, *Duo* can be used as an expansion to the *Res Arcana* base game. To do so, remove the duplicate magic items, First Player token, and *Duo's* summary card. Combine the other *Duo* components with the base game components.

New icons. Turn/straighten mage (Mystic Font, Mystic Monastery, Sleeping Dragon, Solomon's Key) and magic item  (Solomon's Key).

Setup. When using *Duo* as an expansion to the base game, the number of Places of Power and monuments to set out varies with the number of players (see below). All magic items are always available.

 2-4	Monuments	Places of Power
2	7	4
3	10	5
4	12	6

Shuffle the monuments together. Deal the number shown above to form the initial deck and return any unused monuments to the box (without examining them). Then draw 2 monuments and place them face up in the center.

Shuffle the Places of Power together, unseen below the table, turning over half of them several times as you shuffle (so that which side of each Place of Power is face up is random). Place the number shown above and return any unused Places of Power to the box.

Play. Note that there are no Life Loss effects or React powers in *Duo*.

Setup

◆ Set out the Places of Power.

First Game: use their  sides.

◆ Set out 2 monuments. Form a draw pile with the others.

◆ Give 1 of each essence (including Gold) to each player.



◆ Select a player to go first, who takes the first player token.

◆ Deal 2 mages and 8 artifacts to each player. Examine your mages but not the artifacts. Draw 2 artifacts, keep 1, and set 1 aside face down for your rival. Do this 4 times. Examine and shuffle your cards to form a deck. Draw 3 for your initial hand. Each Player select 1 mage. Reveal them. Remove the others.

First Game: Deal 1 start mage and 3 of the 6 start artifacts, (labeled ) to each player to form their initial hand. Deal 5 artifacts unseen to form each player's deck.

◆ In reverse order (starting with the second player), **each player chooses a magic item.**

You are now ready to begin.



Table of Contents

Contents.....	2	3. Victory	9
Setup.....	3	Glossary.....	9
Components.....	4	Sample Round	10
Play	5	Expansion Use	11
1. Collect	5		
2. Actions	6		
- Cost	8		
- Powers	7		
- Passing	8		



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Round Summary

1 Collect essences:

- ◆ do  abilities,
- ◆ may take essences from components.

2 Do actions, 1 per turn:

(alternating from First Player)

- ◆ place an artifact,
 - ◆ claim a monument or a Place of Power,
 - ◆ discard a card for 1 Gold or 2 other essences,
 - ◆ use a power,
 - ◆ pass (see below),
- until both players have passed.

Pass steps:

- if first to pass, take First Player token,
- swap your magic item for a different magic item,
- draw 1 card.

3 Check victory: does any player has 10+ VPs?

- ◆ if not, straighten components; begin next round.

Winning: most VPs

- ◆ if tied, the tied player with most essences in their pool wins;
- ◆ each Gold in pool counts as 2 essences.

Credits

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