

# Generals & Aliens — Rules Sheet

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Players: 3-8

Age: 8+

Time: 10 min.

## Premise

Aliens have attacked Earth. The generals meet to coordinate the counter-attack - but one of them is an alien shapeshifter. Together, the generals must remember and reconstruct a secret signal column by column. The alien, on the other hand, wants to block this without being discovered.

## Components

- **20+ Signal cards.** Each shows a 3×3 or 3×4 grid. Every cell has one of 4 symbols in one of 3 colours.
- **Memory tiles.** One tile for every symbol/colour combination, enough to lay out a full column.
- **Mission cards.** One per player: General missions and one Alien mission.
- **A signal cover sleeve.** To hide the signal card.

## Setup

1. Create a mission deck with a number of cards equal to the number of players. Take 1 random alien card, 1 random general with a secret mission card, and fill out the remainder with standard general cards.
2. Shuffle the cards and deal out one to each player. All players should look at them for 10 seconds in secret. They must be kept secret throughout the game.
3. Place a random signal card (of the chosen difficulty) face down in the middle of the table.

### Goal of the Game

All the generals want to send as close to a perfect signal as possible. For every column with either the correct colours, shapes, or both, they score points. If they get enough points, they win.

The alien wants to scramble the signal without being discovered. The alien card also has a special task - this is only important if you play more than one round (see below).

One of the generals has a secret mission. They want to score a lucrative defense contract and can only do it by (like the alien) having a specific pattern show up in the reconstructed

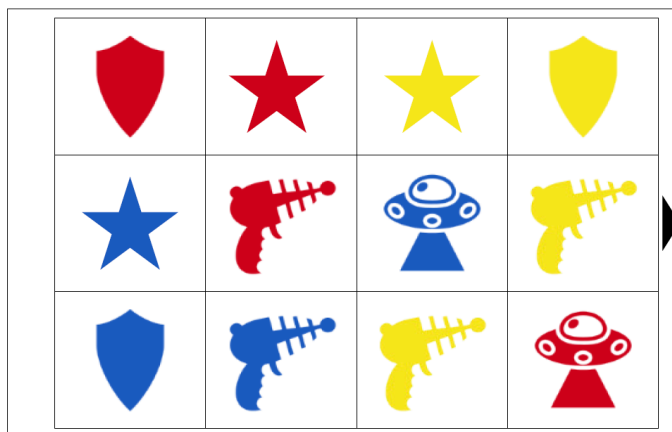
signal. However, they still need the generals - and humanity - to win.

*Example: There must be more guns than shields.*

Note that this general, just as the alien, can and should "cheat" toward their mission by arguing for a tile they know is wrong.

## Round Structure

The standard game is played over 4 rounds - one per column of the signal card. You can also play an easier version where you only play three rounds and ignore the rightmost column on the card, but the structure is the same.



*Sample signal card.*

### 1. Memorise

Reveal the signal card to everyone for **5 seconds**, then flip it and put it into the sleeve with the arrow first.

### 2. Briefing

#### **Only round 1.**

Going round the table, every player introduces themselves and explains their role in Earth's defence. For instance by saying: "I am the general of ..."

*This is pure interference, its job is to make the grid harder to remember. The dumber the introduction the better!*

### 3. Choose a Mission Leader

Round 1: pick the Mission Leader at random. After that, leadership passes clockwise each round.

### 4. Reconstruct the column

Players discuss and use memory tiles to lay out what they believe the current column looks like: three tiles, top to bottom. Anyone can propose, argue, or move tiles.

**The Mission Leader has final say.** When they lock it in, the column is final.

## 5. Check

Uncover **only that column** of the signal card and compare it with the tiles. If either all three colours or all three symbols are correct, the generals score **1 point**. If both are correct, they score **3 points**. Leave the checked column visible.

## 6. Next round

Cover the card, pass leadership, and repeat from step 3 with the next column until you have played through all columns (or 3 only in an easier game).

## End of Game

After the last column has been checked, count the generals' points.

**Signal sent** - If the generals scored at least **6 points** in a 4-round game or **5 points** in a 3-round game, all the standard generals win and the alien loses. However, the general with the secret mission only wins if they have also completed their mission.

**Signal scrambled, but maybe ...** — If the generals don't win, but score at least **3 points** (2 in a 3-round game), they get the chance to win by guessing who the alien is. The players can discuss briefly and then you vote. On the count of three, all players point at whom they think the alien is. If a **majority** of players point at the alien, the generals manage to win against all odds. Again, the general with the secret mission must still have completed their mission to share the victory.

**Alien victory** - If the generals don't get at least 3 points (or 2 in a 3-round game), the alien wins. The alien also wins if the generals fail to uncover the alien.

### Time for more than one game?

We suggest that you play a series of 3 games. When doing that you get the following victory points.

| Player role / End game state | Generals won                                  | Alien won                                   | Alien won- no vote                          |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Alien                        | 0                                             | 5 (+2 if they completed their special task) | 6 (+2 if they completed their special task) |
| Standard general             | 4                                             | 0                                           | 0                                           |
| Secret mission generals      | 1 (+5 if they completed their secret mission) | 0                                           | 0                                           |