

PLANET X CORE RULES

Planet X can be played as a game for two to six people. Players take the role of human colonizers of the mysterious Planet X. The goal is to place ones colonies on the planet's surface in a way that covers the greatest area. An average game should take less than an hour.

Set Up

Planet X is designed to be played with mini-expansions referred to as mods. There are eight mods to choose from and choosing two per game is recommended. Beginning players may want to just include one mods while advanced players might choose to include more than two. It is theoretically possible to play with all eight. Included with the mod rules (see last section of these rules) is an indication of its effect on game play to help you choose.

Planet X is represented by a board with hexagonal areas. The board can be increased from a two player map to a six player one. Player starting areas are evenly spaced around the board edge.

Each player receives five colonies (four for a quick game), places their first colony in a starting area and keeps the remainder in front of them off the board.

The remainder of the board's hexagons is filled with one terrain cube each. For a quick start to the game players can keep clear one hexagon next to their starting colony. Terrain cubes are dice with a question mark, a fissure (looks like a volcano) and four green numbers on their sides. At the start of the game they are all placed with the question mark face up.

Advancement cards are placed in a pile face down after shuffling where they can be reached during play. Different expansions may add or remove cards from the advancement cards used in a game. Expansions will also include specific set-up instructions.

Each player also has two numbered cubes (one positive and one negative). These cubes represent the player's population growth and decline. The positive cube should be placed with the 0 facing up in front of each player.

Lastly players need to determine turn order.

Player turns.

During each players turns the following steps will be taken;

1. The player will increase their population by 1. This is done by turning the population die.
 - If their population die increases to positive 5 (indicated by the house) and the player has lost a colony in the game the player will regain a colony piece of their colour (placing it in front of them and off the board) and resets their die to 0. Players who have not lost a colony piece cannot increase their maximum population past four.
2. The player may spend Experience points. (*At the start of the game players won't have any Experience points as these are gained in game.*)
 - Players may purchase an Advancement Card at a cost of five Experience points.
 - Players may make other purchases with experience points as permitted by different expansions.

3. The player takes an action.

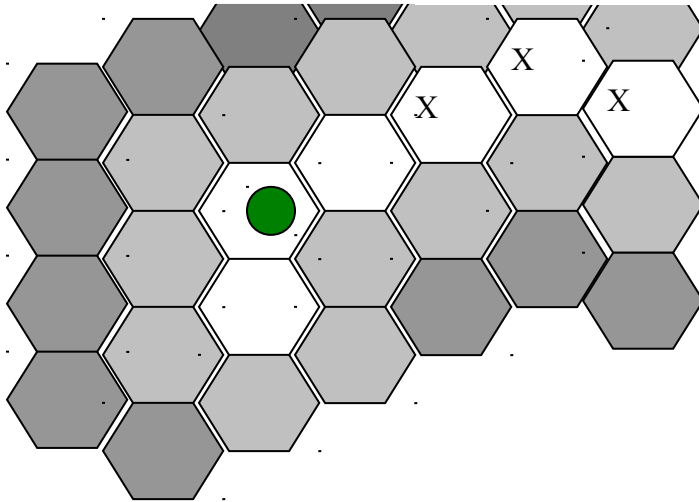
- Generally players can only take one action and cannot choose not to take an action.
- Advancement cards or aspects of an expansion might permit players to take additional **free actions**. These may be limited to particular types of actions. They can be taken before or after a player's usual one action.
- Expansions might permit players to make alternative actions. Alternative actions can be taken instead of a player's **usual action**. Alternative actions cannot be taken instead of any free actions a player might have.
- The effects of one action must be resolved before another action is taken.

The four usual player action types.

A player's usual actions can be one of four types; **Scout, Explore, Colonise or Terraform**.

Players can only Colonise in an area which is part of their territory. Scouting, Exploring and Terraforming can only be conducted in an area (one of the hexagonal spaces) which is adjacent to a player's territory.

A Player's territory is not always exclusive and can be shared with their opponents. It includes the squares on which a player's colony is located and any empty areas either adjacent to a player's colony or connected to a player's colony by empty areas.



This diagram shows a green colony as a green circle. The white areas are empty and so constitute the green player's territory. The lightly shaded areas are adjacent to their territory and so could be scouted (if they contain a question mark), explored (unless they contain a fissure) or terraformed (if they contain a fissure). The areas with an X are possible locations for a second colony.

Note. Your colony placement can be used to decrease your opponent's territory or even to cut off some of their colonies from their home colony (see scoring). Also when one player explores an area it may open up territory for a number of players. If an empty area connects to more than one player's colony it counts as territory for both players.

To **Scout** is to pick up a die in one area and roll it. Only areas where the die has the question mark facing up can be scouted. Place the rolled result (even if it is a question mark) face up in that area. If the result is a fissure the player rolling the die loses one population.

While players can only scout areas where the die has a question mark facing up players can explore an area where the die has either a question mark or a green number facing up (from a previous Scout roll).

To **Explore** an area where the die has the question mark facing up pick up the die and roll it. If the result is a question mark re-roll the die. If the result is a fissure place it face up in the square and the rolling player loses two population. If the result is a 1,2,3 or 4 the player loses that much population and takes the die with the same face up into their possession to represent Experience points. In this way when a green number is rolled a player will by default gain Experience equal to the population lost and an empty area will be left on the board.

To **Explore** an area where the die has a green number facing up (due to being scouted previously) the player does not roll the die. They simply resolve the loss to population and gain in Experience based on the number shown. Once again the die is taken into the player's possession. Players cannot **Explore** an area with a fissure face up.

Note: When players lose population they use their population die to indicate this. Just as a positive five population gains a player a colony piece a negative five population will cost a player a colony piece. A player takes one of their unplaced colony pieces and moves it away from their playing area. That piece counts as lost and is not available to be placed until a player regains it.

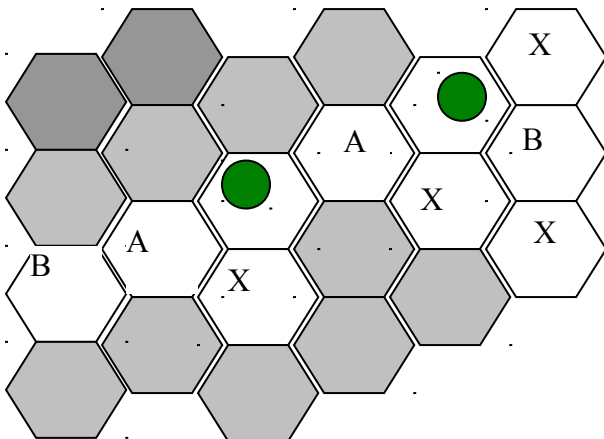
Players must remove a colony piece from the board if they have no other colony pieces to lose. If they remove their last colony from the board they count as having lost the game. In a more than two player game the remaining players continue play.

To **Colonise** a player must have an unplaced colony piece in their possession and a location where they could place it on the board with this action. Colony pieces can only be placed on the board in their respective players territory (see below). Colonies also cannot be placed adjacent to another colony of any player (controller or opponent).

A player who chooses to Colonise must first roll the winds of change die;

- If a blank is rolled nothing happens.
- If a 2 is rolled each player must choose two empty areas for each of their colonies, one of which must be adjacent to that colony and the other of which must be adjacent to the first area chosen, or to that colony. (see diagram below) All other empty areas regain a die with the question mark turned up.
- If a 1 is rolled each player must choose one empty area adjacent to each of their colonies and all other empty areas regain a die with the question mark turned up.

It can be possible that a player will have to choose an area to keep clear that would advantage an opponent. This cannot be avoided.



Presuming a player had just rolled a two on the winds of change die this diagram shows a possible response for the green player. The green colonies are shown as green circles. The white areas are currently empty. The Areas marked A and B are the areas Green elects to preserve as empty. The areas marked with an X regain a die with the question mark facing up.

It is possible that the winds of change may result in a player's intended colony location no longer being empty. Players do not have to place a colony piece on the board after they have rolled for the winds of change but if they don't they can't do any other action.

Lastly, players who place a colony piece on the board must lose two population to represent the number of people squashed by suitcases in the moving process.

To **Terraform** a player chooses an area with a face up fissure and turns the die to a question mark.

An area to be terraformed must be adjacent to the player's territory *and* a player must have the consent of all other players whose territory is adjacent to the area to be terraformed. A player who does not gain the required consent can choose another action.

Advancement Cards

When players purchase one or more advancement cards they draw them from the top of the Advancement Card pile. Where an advancement card would contradict a general rule of the game and an advancement card overrules that rule.

In early games players should reveal their cards to all players immediately and keep them revealed. This way all players can agree on the effect of cards while people are learning the rules. A group of advanced players may choose to keep cards secret until they wish to use them. If so, cards will need to be revealed for any benefit to be obtained.

The End of the Game

Whenever any player puts down their last colony the game is over for them – they can take no more turns, their population will neither increase nor decrease and no more purchases are made. (For the purposes of *The Planet Reacts* the player's government is still counted with the policy with which they ended their game.) This puts them in a vulnerable position but the advantage is that they will be putting pressure on their opponents to finish.

For the remaining players, until their last colonies are played, the current round and two more subsequent rounds are played. The game is then ended for all players even if not all their colonies have been placed. When all players' games have ended scoring occurs to determine the winner.

Scoring

To score each player first removes from the board any colonies which are "cut-off". A cut-off colony is one which cannot be connected back to a player's starting colony via either open territory or areas with other colonies of their own.

Once this is done all the terrain cubes remaining in any area can be removed. Players then draw the shortest path connecting their colonies counting all the terrain squares including those with colonies on them. This number is their score.

PLANET X MODS

Mods are really what makes Planet X come alive. The basic game comes with eight different mods listed below. Each are simple add-ons to the basic game. A typical game will use between two to four mods but technically it is possible to use all eight!

Governments: This planet is ours; burn back the jungle and put up a mall. Or are you some peacenik who wants' to hug yourself some blue alien koalas?

Governments allow players to choose between two radically different approaches to planetary exploration, dominance or empathy. Be careful because the planet will respond in kind.

Farmers: If you eat, thank a farmer they say. The principle is unchanged even if the food is like nothing you'll see back at earth. Why this corn tastes like chicken! Here is a very simple mod that can accelerate the end game in particular.

Explorers: A mod which provides an additional incentive to gain experience, either to unlock the central board spaces or to add new ocean routes to connect up colonies. Coupled with mods like Betrayal and Fury in which opening up the board poses challenges Explorers makes for a game full of potential surprises.

Betrayal: There isn't a lot of direct conflict in the core game. Betrayal either fixes or wrecks that principle depending on your opinion. Do you want to Zap your fellow humans in the back? Of course you do.

Merchants: Stuff you don't need is cluttering up the halls. Your opponent needs that stuff. Normally you'd rather burn it and blow the smoke in their face. What if your opponent offers you some stuff you want for the stuff you don't want? Wait, does this mean your friends now? These existential questions are raised in this mod. Only recommended for three or more players.

Mutation: Everyone's getting a little too comfortable on Planet X. Eating the local food, listening to the local music, growing new limbs... What! Mutate too far and headquarters won't recognize your colonizing efforts or your humanity. Don't mutate at all and your not-so-human opponents will outstrip your colonies growth.

Fury: The planet's wildlife is deliberately attacking the colonists. Find out why before humanity is booted off the surface. The title of Saviour of the Colonists is also up for grabs in this mod. With Fury you will need to pick your way across the planet much more carefully at first.

Special P; Fissures have a real benefit now as the source of Special P. "What's Special P?", you ask. Only the most amazing spice in the whole galaxy. You'll wonder how you ever colonized a planet without it. If only it weren't so darn addictive.

GOVERNMENTS

Set Up: Take the government cards and place them next to the advance cards.

Special Rules. During the start of round phase players who don't have a government can spend five experience points to gain one of the government cards. Upon obtaining a government card it is placed either side up in front of it's owning player. The face up side indicates the governments policy and has effects on the basic rules for the game for that player. Like an Advancement card these effects overrule what is written in these general rules.

Players will be able to change policy (flipping the card) by paying two experience points in any subsequent start of round phase in the same order that they would normally spend their experience points.

The Planet Reacts .

The Planet Reacts is a special rule that affects all players (even those without governments) while the majority of governments have a particular policy of either Harmony or Dominance. For example, if one player has a government in Harmony and no other player has a government then the Planet Reacts rule on the Harmony side of a government card is applied (because the majority of Governments have Harmony as their policy). If the same number of players have a government in Harmony as have governments in Dominance then no policy is in the majority and no version of The Planet Reacts rule applies.

FARMERS:

Set Up: No special set up rules.

Special Rules. As an alternative action a player may farm. When farming first count the empty hexes adjacent to all the colonies you control (not counting any hexes from sea routes). Do NOT count the same empty hex twice if it is adjacent to two of your colonies. Then roll half as many terrain dice, rounding down if necessary. For every green numbered result the player rolls on these terrain die they increase their population by one.

Special Interactions. If you are playing with the Governments mod then players can agree at the start of the game to apply the Planet Reacts rule to terrain dice when farming.

EXPLORERS:

Set Up: Take the sea route board pieces and place them next to the advance cards. Place the Promised Land counters on top of the cubes in the seven central hexes in the middle of the board.

Special Rules.

Sea Routes. Players can spend five experience points to gain a sea route board piece provided they can

immediately place the piece. Once obtained the sea route must be placed along the outside of the board so long as each hex in it touches the board and one hex borders the player's territory.

A sea route piece counts as the extension of any players' territory that connects with it with the exception that they cannot place a colony in any of the hexes in it. In addition the hexes on a sea route do not count against the hexes a player can keep open due to a winds of change role nor are they ever filled in with terrain cubes – even by the Sabotage card. (If playing with Betrayal then Defences can be placed on a sea route hex if they are also adjacent to a colony).

Promised Land.

Players cannot affect any dice (eg. by scouting or exploring or through any other means) that are beneath a Promised Land token. (They are shrouded by a peculiar fog). By expending five experience points players can place a Promised Land token under the die in its hex. When they do they turn the die in that hex face up to the facing of their choice other than a question mark. Players can only do this in hexes adjacent to their territory.

If a hex containing a Promised land token contains a die with a question mark facing up and the Promised land token is not on top of the die, place it on top of the die immediately. This can occur if the hex is terraformed from a fissure or if the square is filled in by a "winds of change" roll.

At the end of the game players gain an additional victory point for each colony they score with that is on top of a Promised Land token.

Note: Removing Promised Land tokens and placing sea routes do not count as actions but are done in the same way as obtaining advance cards during a players turn.

BETRAYAL:

Set Up. Give each player a Zap token and two Defence tokens to place in front of them. Remove Circle the Wagons from the Advance card deck.

Special Rules.

Players gain one free Zap action and one free Defence action each turn.

A Zap action can only be taken if you control a Zap token and you control territory adjacent to an opponent's colony. In this case you may Zap that opponent placing your Zap token next to the advance cards and causing the targeted opponent to lose three population unless they surrender. (see below)

As an alternative action (not a free action) you may regain your Zap token. You may only control a maximum of one Zap token at a time.

As a Defence action you may either put one of your out-of-play defence tokens in an empty hex adjacent to a colony you control or you may move one of your in play defence tokens to a different empty hex adjacent to a colony you control.

A defence token means that the hex occupied by that token is not counted as any other players territory for all rules that consider territory. This means that your opponents may not count this hex as territory adjacent to your colony when seeing if they can Zap you. (It also means they cannot count this hex as territory when determining if they can scout or explore adjacent hexes). A hex with a defence token is still considered empty for all rules that ask if a hex is empty (ie. farming or the Sabotage advance card).

If a hex with a defence token is filled by a die such as by an unlucky winds of change roll, then that token is returned to its controlling player.

Conflict Zones. Sometimes a hex may be adjacent to two different players' colonies. In this situation both players can place a defence token in that hex. With more than one player's defence token in a hex that hex then becomes a conflict zone and counts as nobodies territory until at least one of the defences is moved away. The hex still counts as an empty hex. (Think of the hexes as large tracts of land in which soldiers fight but farming can still occur albeit dangerously.)

Surrender. When a player would lose population due to being zapped they may instead choose to Surrender. A player who surrenders places all their defence tokens, and their zap token if they control one, next to the advance cards. A player who has surrendered cannot regain any zap or defence tokens this game, nor can they be the target of any future Zap actions this game.

MERCHANTS:

Set Up. Give each player an Oath token.

Special Rules. Merchants provides the rules for players to trade a large number of elements of the game. Players can trade experience, advancement cards and population. Trades occur during the stage of a players turn when they would purchase advancement cards and must involve the player whose turn it is. Only one trade can be made per turn with one other player and the player whose turn it is decides who they want to trade with. All trades must be mutually acceptable before being resolved.

If playing with the Special P mod players can trade Special P tokens but this must be done during another players turn because any Special P tokens on a players' own turn would be spent first before doing anything else including trading. Also one addiction token can be included in a trade (with mutual consent) for every two population being traded. Basically you can trade addicted members of your population if you have any and if your trading partner agrees; this is represented by one addiction token accompanying the two points of population.

If playing with the Mutation mod players can trade Mimicry cards but not Change cards.

Oath tokens. As part of any trade a player can, once per game, place their Oath token on any hex on the board (but not on sea route hexes if Explorers is included). Oath tokens may be placed under the colonies of any player, under Promised land tokens even if they are above the die in their hex, in empty or full squares and without regard for territory; anywhere really. Oath tokens cannot be moved once placed. If a player colonies either on top of their Oath token or adjacent to it then the Oath token is removed entirely from the game. In this way the Oath token represents a promise not to colonies in those spaces. At the end of the game Oath tokens which a player has not placed on the board or which have been placed and remain on the board are worth two victory points.

MUTATION:

Set Up. Give each player an Adaptation card to place face up in front of them. Place the remaining Mutation, Transformation and Mimicry cards next to the Advance cards.

Special Rules. For five experience points players can purchase a Change card. Players cannot purchase a Transformation card before they purchased a Mutation card. Players can only control one of each type of these cards. They are purchased in the same way as purchasing an Advance card.

Each Change card has benefits. These are listed above the cards image. These are cumulative so if you control all three change cards you will receive all three benefits.

Each Change card has drawbacks. These are also cumulative. These drawbacks apply while a player controls the cards unless they are able to cover the card up with a mimicry card. If a change card is covered up by a Mimicry card its benefit still applies (you can place the Mimicry card partly over the change card so that just the image and below-image text are covered). Mimicry cards are purchased for five points, in the same way as Advancement cards.

Mimicry cards must be placed over the most extreme Change card a player controls first, which means Transformation before Mutation and Mutation before Adaptation. If a player has a Change card covered up by a Mimicry card and then purchases another Change card, (ie. a Mutation card or Transformation card) then the Mimicry card is moved to on top of the later purchased (and more extreme) Change card.

Level	Title of Change Card	Benefit	Drawback
1	Adaptation	You reroll question marks when scouting.	-1 Victory point and "Something's Fishy"
2	Mutation	Gain a free scout or explore action each turn.	-2 Victory Points
3	Transformation	+1 population a turn.	You may not win the game. You may not place colonys.

Did it work? Mimicry cards have a chance of letting you down at the end of the game when you most need them. At the end of the game *before scoring* one player rolls a terrain die. The facing of this die (see below for the value of Fissures and Question marks) determines how much each player must pay, in Experience Points, for each Mimicry card they control. If they cannot pay that amount the Mimicry card is discarded. Players with sufficient Experience points to pay for one or two of their Mimicry cards, pay for them and then discard the rest.

The Adaptation card comes with a drawback of "Something's Fishy". If this card is not covered with a mimicry card at the time the terrain die is rolled for the **Did it work?** rule above, then Fissures will count as four and Question marks count as zero for that player. If "Something's Fishy" is negated by the placement of a mimicry card over their Adaptation card then both Fissures and Question marks will count as zero for that player.

FURY:

Set Up. Place the Savior of the Colonists token next to the Advance cards.

Special Rules. With this expansion two rules apply temporarily. Firstly each player can make a free scout action in their turn. Secondly exploring a square with a green numbered result will result in double the loss of population!

Understanding why the planet is so hostile to exploration is a priority for human headquarters. To reflect this the first person who spends ten experience points finding out why will gain three victory points represented by the Savior of the Colonists token. After any player does this the two rules relevant to this expansion no longer apply.

Note. Fury can really slow down the early part of the game and sometimes much more of the game too. This makes Fury a great way to balance out expansions like Mutation if they are speeding your games up too much. It also means that if you couple Fury with Betrayal you might not make it off Planet X alive!

SPECIAL P:

Set Up. Place the 20 Special P tokens from this expansion next to the Advance cards.

Special Rules. Players can terraform in a hex where the die is a green number face up. This is in addition to being able to terraform a fissure. When they terraform a hex where the die is a green number face up they turn that hex into a fissure rather than a question mark. This is subject to all the other rules for terraforming.

Players can also conduct the alternative action of mining fissures adjacent to their territory. When a fissure is mined the mining player gains a Special P token.

Players must spend any Special P tokens they control at the start of their next turn to gain 2 Experience and 2 Population per token. When they do they flip the token over to gain an Addiction token per Special P token spent.

At the start of any turn if a player is unable to spend a Special P token their colonists are understandably disappointed and especially so if they are addicted. This is reflected by rolling a terrain die for each addiction counter a player has (called "rolling for addiction"). The rolling player will miss their entire turn if they roll a total of 8 or more in green numbers (fissures and questions marks count as zero).

Note. Players who miss their turn don't increase their population by one and are unable to spend Experience points that turn. Because there is no risk of missing a turn if a player has only one addiction counter, a player with one addiction counter doesn't have to roll for addiction.

SOME SUGGESTED COMBINATIONS:

Farmers and Special P : This is Planet X as a bustling, thriving economy, a land of rich resources and giant bee honey. Perfect for beginners you can also try this if you are not in the mood to hack slowly away at a toxic jungle but would rather race to the finish. More experienced players may want to include **Merchants** or **Explorers** as well, neither of which will slow the game down.

Fury, and Mutations. Players are faced with pressure to adapt to the planet's harsh environment in this scenario. Mutating though will cost precious experience points. Will they take the risk of being left behind in the race to transform and try to become the Saviour of the Colonists instead?

Betrayal, Explorers and Governments. Explorers makes experience very valuable in this game. A wise player might choose an empathic style of government that treads softly and seeks to learn about the world of Planet X. This will open up sea routes and the valuable promised lands. On the other hand a switch to a government in Domination will enable a player to get the jump on opponents and zap them in the back maybe even using the sea to launch the attack.

Betrayal, Merchants and Special P : Here's a game with a whole lot of player interaction – not all of it negative. Help each other out or just help yourself to some Special P. Just be careful not to lose a crucial turn to addiction when an opponent can zap past your defences.

Governments, Farming and Mutations : Combining Governments with Mutations tends to increase the value of Empathic policies – you need the experience to mutate and cover your mutations. Combining Governments with Farming encourages Domination because you can clear land faster and farm while still exploring. These three mods will therefore pull players in potentially different directions. Whatever you do, prepare for an accelerated end game of big turns with lots of population gain.

FINAL NOTE:

Planet X is currently in its play test stage. The ultimate hope for this game is that it will spawn a community of players who themselves invent new and wondrous mods. Would you like to play as different alien races with unique abilities? That sounds like a fun and interesting mod to develop, go for it! The base game is simply meant to be that – a base from which to launch a gaming community.

A prototype will be made available to play through Table Top Simulator and the Steam Workshop. This will be updated as the game develops. Already feedback has suggested improvement.

Discussions are also currently underway with an artist. The theme will be reminiscent of those glorious sci-fi pulp novel covers. I sincerely hope you enjoy this game and would love to keep in touch. – Tony Camilleri (somekindoftony@gmail.com)