TABLETOP AT PLAY / QUICK-START GUIDE

Gaia Project

BASE GAME / 2–4 PLAYERS / START HERE

Build a network of colonies over six rounds. Mines get your economy moving. Upgrades and research open better options. The winner is the player with the most victory points (VP).

Set up your first game

Map and factions. Use the official first-game map, faction line-up and starting mine positions for your player count. Keep the diagrams on rulebook pp. 4–7 open.

Shared boards. Set out tech tiles and the Terraforming reward on the research board; keep remaining federation tokens nearby. Lay out six round scoring tiles and two final scoring tiles. Display round boosters equal to the player count plus three. At two players, add neutral markers at the numbers shown on the two final scoring tiles.

Your faction. Set up its structures, resource markers, Q.I.C., power and research as shown on the faction board. Start at 10 VP. Starting research may give a one-time bonus; income waits for the first Income phase. Choose boosters in reverse turn order.

Know the pieces



Mine	Trading station	Research lab	Planetary institute	Academy	Satellite	Gaiaformer
1 power	2 power	2 power	3 power	3 power	Connector	Planet converter

Original schematic icons, not component photos. Structure power is a building value; it is not the same as spendable power tokens.

The six-round loop

1 Income

Collect income from your faction board, booster, tech and research.

2 Gaia

Return committed power as your faction directs; convert pending Transdim planets.

3 Actions

Take one main action per turn clockwise, skipping players who passed.

4 Clean-up

Clear action markers, ready boosters and remove the round tile. Skip after round six.

Before turn one: Read both final goals and the first round tile. Look at the next round’s tile before committing to an opening.

What can I do on my turn?

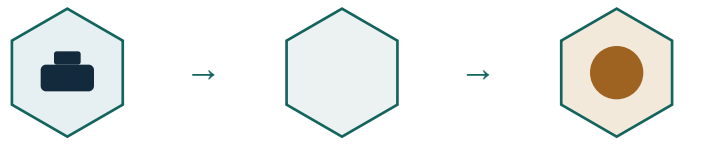
ACTION MENU / WORKED MOVES

1. **Build a mine.** Pay 2 credits + 1 ore, plus any habitability and extra range costs. Pick an unoccupied planet within reach. Your faction board shows terraforming steps; the research board gives the ore cost per step. An unclaimed Gaia Planet normally costs 1 Q.I.C. extra.
2. **Start a Gaia Project.** Put an available Gaiaformer on a reachable, unclaimed Transdim planet. Move the cost in power tokens from your cycle to the Gaia area. It converts in the next Gaia phase; colonize it later by paying the normal mine cost, without a Gaia habitability fee.
3. **Upgrade one structure.** Use the branch and prices below. Return the replaced structure to its faction-board row. A new lab or academy grants a tech tile; check the tile position for your associated research advance.
4. **Form a federation.** Connect your own colonies worth at least 7 structure power and take an available federation token; see page 3.
5. **Research.** Spend 4 knowledge to advance one level. Level 5 has one spot per track and also requires flipping a green federation token.
6. **Take a shared action.** Pay the shown power or Q.I.C. cost. Mark that space used this round.
7. **Take a special action.** Use an available orange action on a component you own; mark it used.
8. **Pass.** Resolve pass bonuses and swap your booster, except no new booster in round six. First to pass takes the first-player marker. No more turns this round.

UPGRADE PATHS

Mine → Trading station: **6 credits + 2 ore** (3 credits if an opponent has a structure within 2 spaces).
Trading station → Institute: **6c + 4o** or → Lab: **5c + 3o**. Lab → Academy: **6c + 6o**.

Worked move: reach a planet and build



Your base range is 1. Spend 1 Q.I.C. to add 2 range for this action. If the target needs one terraforming step and your track charges 3 ore per step, pay **1 Q.I.C. + 2 credits + 4 ore** total. Terraform and place the mine together.

Free exchanges on your faction board go before or after your main action, never in the middle or after passing.

Power, federations & scoring

TABLE REFERENCE / COMMON TRAPS

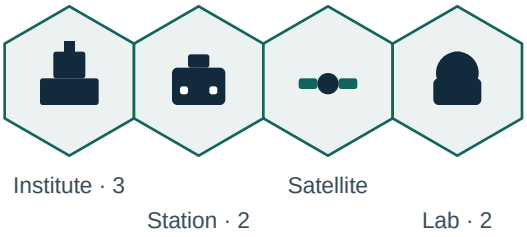
Power: charge, spend or discard?

Charge: Move power I → II until I is empty, then II → III. **Spend:** Cycle tokens from III back to I. **Discard:** Remove tokens from your power cycle entirely. New tokens enter I.

Worked move: accept a neighbor's power offer

An opponent upgrades within two spaces of both your mine and lab. Your lab is worth 2, so if you can charge both, you may charge 2 by paying 1 VP. You can still do this after passing.

Federations: connect seven power



Worked move: Your institute touches your trading station; your lab is separated by one empty hex. If there is no shorter legal route, discard one power token to put a satellite in that hex. Total: **3 + 2 + 2 = 7**. Claim a federation token and score its immediate benefits. Your new federation cannot touch an existing federation of yours. Never pay for a satellite from the Gaia area.

Score after the sixth round

Final objectives: Score each ranking 18 / 12 / 6 / 0 VP. For ties, split the points for the occupied ranks evenly. Include neutral markers in a two-player game.
Research: Each track gives 4 VP at level 3, 8 at level 4, or 12 at level 5.
Resources: Add your remaining credits, ore and knowledge; score 1 VP per full 3. Highest total wins. Tied players share the win.

Two first-game traps

A planet with just a Gaiaformer cannot extend your range. And a Gaia Project started in round 6 never converts. Your faction board overrides the general rules where it says so.

Independent player aid. Not a replacement for the rulebook. Automa and expansions are outside this guide.

Official English rules **Publisher FAQ** **TAP Pass or Play: quick take (not a teach)**