

# POTEMKIN EMPIRE

RUSSIA: 1787. Empress Catherine the Great is taking a surprise trip down the Dnieper River to survey her new kingdom. This will take her directly past your old, unremarkable village. You don't have the time or money to make your village impressive, but with a few pieces of timber and some strategically placed facades you could certainly make your village *seem* impressive. More impressive, at least, than all the villages around it. What's behind the riverfront doesn't matter, after all, only the opinion of her Imperial Majesty.

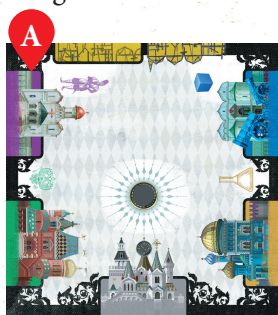
## OVERVIEW

In **POTEMKIN EMPIRE**, you will play the role of a mayor of a small Russian village. You will attempt to impress Empress Catherine by convincing her that you have the most prosperous and stable village in the land. But with her visit quickly approaching there's no time to *really* fix your village so you're just going to have to make it *look* as impressive as possible. That is to say, you're faking it. You'll accomplish this by drafting interior cards which are either real or fake, then combining them with facades to construct an imposing, if flimsy, kingdom.

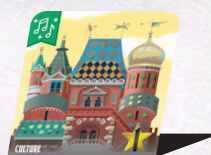
You will score points by producing goods in your industrial buildings, exposing opponents' fake buildings with spies, constructing government and cultural buildings, and passing off fake buildings as real ones. The player with the most points at the end of the game wins!

## CONTENTS

- A. 1 game board
- B. 85 Interior cards
- C. 64 Facade cards
- D. 40 resource cubes
- E. 15 agent meeples
- F. 1 capitol meeple
- G. 1 scientist meeple
- H. 1 shield meeple
- I. 5 Mode tokens
- J. 5 player aids
- K. 4 month tokens








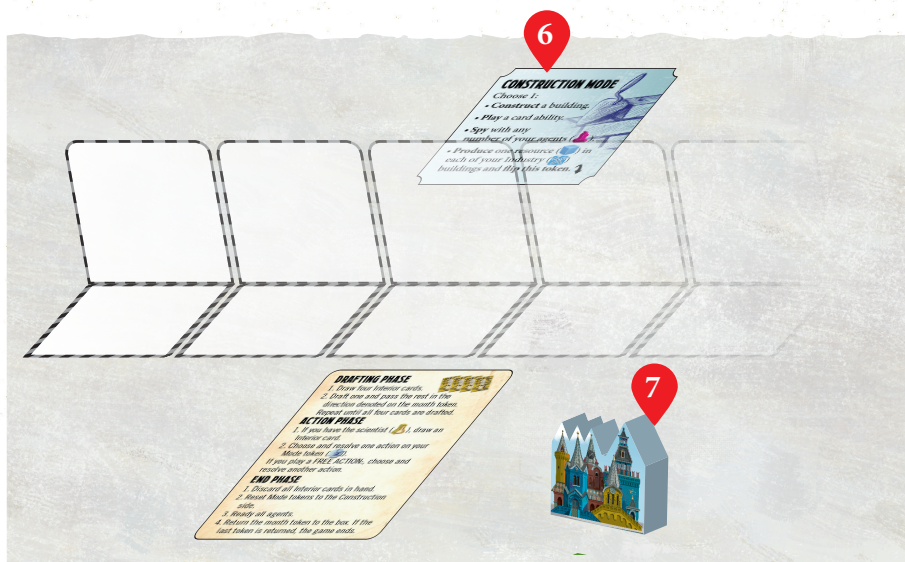
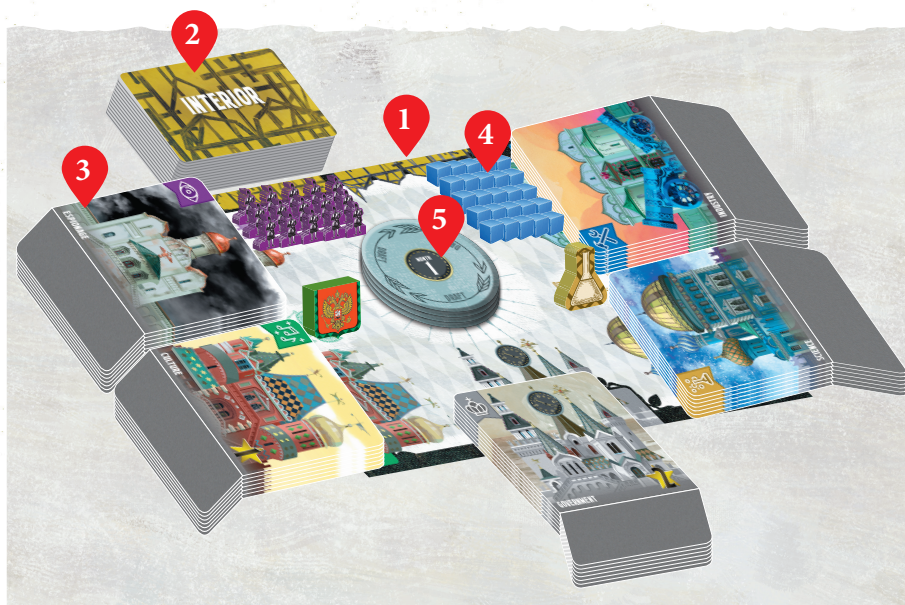
To set up your first game, apply all of the stickers to the corresponding meeples. Additionally, fold all of the Facade cards along the crease line so that they stand up the way that is shown in the rulebook.





# SETUP

1. Set the game board in the middle of the table. Everything on or next to the game board is considered part of the **supply**.
2. Shuffle all of the Interior cards together to make the Interior deck. Place it facedown next to the board.
3. There are five types of Facade cards: Culture , Espionage , Government , Industry , and Science . Separate them into piles based on type. Place those piles next to the game board on the corresponding spaces.
4. Place all of the resource cubes and agent meeples in the corresponding sections of the game board. Place the scientist meeple and the shield meeple in the middle of the game board.
5. Stack the four month tokens faceup in order so that the token labeled “4” is on the bottom and the token labeled “1” is on the top. Place this stack in the corresponding space on the game board.
6. Give each player a player aid and a Mode token. The Mode token shows which actions are available to a player. Each player sets this token to Construction Mode and places it in front of them at the top of their play area so that they have plenty of room to construct their village behind this token.
7. The player who has most recently interacted with a government bureaucracy is the first player. Place the capitol meeple in front of that player.





# GAMEPLAY

**POTEMKIN EMPIRE** is played over four rounds (months). Each month consists of three phases: a **Drafting** phase, an **Action** phase, and an **End** phase.

## DRAFTING PHASE

At the start of the Drafting phase, deal four Interior cards to each player starting with the first player. If the Interior deck is ever empty, shuffle the discard pile facedown to form a new Interior deck.

Each player drafts an Interior card in secret. Do this by choosing and keeping one card from what you were dealt, then pass the remaining cards in the direction indicated on the month token. For months 1 and 3, it is clockwise. For months 2 and 4, it is counterclockwise.

Next, choose a card to keep from the cards you were just passed and pass the remaining cards in the same direction. Repeat this until all players have drafted four cards.

## ACTION PHASE

Once the players have each drafted four Interior cards, the Action phase begins. During this phase, players will take turns performing one **action** starting with the player with the capitol meeple and then continuing in the same direction as cards were passed during the Drafting phase. Players will continue taking turns until only one player is left in Construction Mode.

## ACTIONS

When it is your turn, you will choose one action listed on your Mode token to perform this turn. Players start each Action phase in **Construction Mode**. There are four types of actions a player can choose while they are in Construction Mode: **construct a building**, **play a card ability**, **spy with agents**, and **produce resources**.

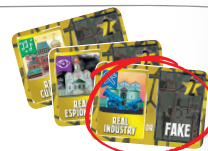
Once a player chooses the produce resources action, they will switch into **Production Mode** where they will only be able to **play a card ability** or **produce resources** for the rest of this month's Action phase.

## EXAMPLE

1. Bob is dealt four Interior cards shown on the right. He chooses to keep the circled card. He places it facedown in front of him on the table. He passes the three remaining cards to Candi on his left.



2. Next, he looks at the three cards Abby passed him. He chooses the circled card and places it facedown on top of the first card he drafted. He passes the remaining two cards to Candi.

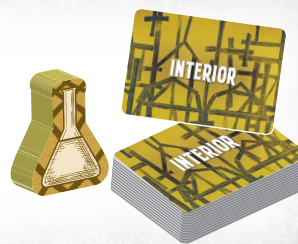


3. Then, he looks at the two cards Abby just passed him. He selects the circled one. He passes the remaining card to Candi. He places the last card Abby passes him facedown on the three other cards he chose.



## SCIENTIST MEEPLE

If you have the scientist meeple at the beginning of your turn, draw an Interior card from the deck.



### CONSTRUCTION MODE

Choose 1:

- Construct a building.
- Play a card ability.
- Spy with any number of your agents (👤).
- Produce one resource (🏠) in each of your Industry (🏭) buildings and flip this token.

### PRODUCTION MODE

Choose 1:

- Play a card ability.
- Produce one resource (🏠) in each of your Industry (🏭) buildings.

## 👁️ CONSTRUCT A BUILDING

When you choose to construct a building, first choose the type of building you want to construct. Stand up a Facade card (of the type you chose) in your play area so that the back is facing you. Place an Interior card from your hand facedown on the base of the Facade. You must have at least one Interior card in your hand to choose this action. When you construct a building, you will not resolve the ability text on the Interior card. You are not allowed to rearrange the Facade or Interior cards in your city.



**FACADE CARDS** determine the type of the building. All of the Facade cards of each type are identical. There are five types of buildings you can construct, each with different effects: **Culture**, **Espionage**, **Government**, **Industry**, and **Science**.

**Culture:** You will score 1 point for each Culture building in your village at the end of the game. Additionally, after you construct a Culture building, if you have the most or are tied for the most Culture buildings, you gain the **shield meeples** from the board or from the player who has it. Having the **shield meeples** helps protect you from spies. For more information, check out the **Spy** section on page 6.



**Espionage:** After you construct an Espionage building, place an agent meeples behind it. In a later turn, you can choose the **Spy with Agents** action to destroy opponents' fake buildings. At the end of the game, you will score 2 points for each building you have destroyed. For more information on spying, see the **Spy with Agents** section on page 6.



**Government:** You will score 2 points for each Government building in your village at the end of the game. Additionally, after you construct a Government building, if you have the most or are tied for the most Government buildings, you gain the **capitol meeples** from the player who has it. The player with the **capitol meeples** takes the first turn at the start of the Action phase.



**Industry:** When you choose the **produce resources** action in a later turn, you will place one resource in (behind) each Industry building in your village. You will score 1 point for every resource you have in buildings at the end of the game.



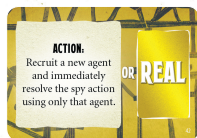
**Science:** After you construct a Science building, if you have the most or are tied for the most Science buildings, you gain the **scientist meeples** from the board or from the player who has it. When you start your turn with the **scientist meeples**, you draw an Interior card.





**INTERIOR CARDS** determine whether a building is real or fake. There are three types of Interior cards: real, fake, and conditionally real.

**Real** Interior cards have “REAL” written on the right side. Buildings constructed with real Interior cards are real buildings.



**Fake** Interior cards have “FAKE” written on the middle or right side of the card. Buildings constructed with fake Interior cards are fake buildings.



**Conditionally real** Interior cards have the image of the building type that would make them real on the left side of the card. Buildings constructed with these Interior cards are real buildings if the Facade card used to construct the building matches the image shown. If the building type does not match the image, the building is fake.



## PLAY A CARD ABILITY

If you have an Interior card with an **ACTION:** ability, you may use this effect by playing it from your hand.

When you do, resolve the ability and place the card in the discard pile. If it is a “**FREE ACTION:**”, you resolve another action this turn.

You may play multiple “**FREE ACTION:**” cards in a turn in this way. You can use an Interior card for its ability or to construct a building, but not both.

## EXAMPLE

It is Abby's turn during the Action phase. Abby wants the scientist meeple to come to her village so that she can draw an extra Interior card at the start of her next turn, so she chooses to construct a Science building.

She wants it to be a real Science building so she selects the Interior card shown, which is real if used to construct a Science building.

She grabs a Science Facade from the supply and stands it up in front of her so that she sees the back of it.

She places the Interior card she chose facedown behind it. Abby now has more Science buildings than any other player, so she places the scientist meeple in her village.



## EXAMPLE

It is Candi's turn during the Action phase. She is planning on spying soon because she has two ready Agents.

She has the Interior card shown in her hand. She plays it and looks at the Science building that Abby just constructed.

She sees that it is real, so she knows not to check it with one of her agents. Since that was a **FREE ACTION**, Candi now chooses another action to perform this turn.





## SPY WITH AGENTS

When you choose to spy, you will use any number of your **ready** agents to check opponents' buildings to find out if those buildings are real. Agents are **ready** if they are behind buildings. Once your agent is done spying, it is **spent**, and you set it in front of your buildings next to your Mode token. All spent agents will be readied during the End phase.

When you spy, place one agent in front of each building you want to check. Once you have placed all of the agents you want, the corresponding Interior cards are revealed.

If the building is **fake**, that building is **destroyed**. When a building is destroyed, the Facade, all cubes, and any agent meeples behind that building are returned to the supply. Additionally, the player spying places that Interior card facedown under their Mode token. At the end of the game, you will score 2 points for each building you have destroyed.

If the building is **real**, you place the Interior card faceup on the table in front of that building so that information is known to all players for the rest of the game.

There are three **special rules** related to spying:

**Shield meeple** (🛡️) The shield meeple provides some protection from spies. Therefore, if you want to spy on a building in the village that has the shield meeple, you must first spend an agent to return the shield meeple to the game board. Otherwise, you cannot spy on an opponent's building if that player has the shield meeple.

**Scientist meeple** (🧪) If any building is destroyed in the player's village that has the scientist meeple, the scientist is scared out of that village, so it is returned to the game board.

**Espionage buildings** (👁️) The stakes are higher for an agent that spies on an Espionage building. If the building is real, the agent is killed (returned to the supply). If the building is fake, you may immediately use that agent to check on an additional building in any player's village.



### EXAMPLE

It's still Candi's turn. She has decided to spy. She knows Abby's Science building is real, so she won't use an agent there. She chooses to check two of Bob's Industry buildings.

Bob reveals the Interior card of the first building. It is real.

The real Interior card is placed faceup in front of that building for the rest of the game. The Interior card of the second building is revealed. It is fake!



Candi places the fake Interior card under her Mode token. It will score Candi 2 points at the end of the game. Bob returns the Facade, and the resource cube behind it, to the supply.



## 🔧 PRODUCE RESOURCES

When you choose to produce resources, place one resource cube behind each of your Industry buildings, even the fake ones. Then, if you were not already in Production Mode, flip your Mode token to the Production Mode side. After you flip into Production Mode, if there is only one player still in Construction Mode, the Action phase ends immediately.

## END PHASE

As soon as there is only one person in Construction Mode, the Action phase ends and the End phase begins. During the End phase, each player:

1. Discards any Interior cards they have remaining in their hand.
2. Resets their Mode token so that the Construction Mode side is faceup.
3. Readies all of their spent agents by placing one agent behind each of their Espionage buildings if able. If you have more agents than Espionage buildings, you must place one behind each before placing multiples in any. If you have no Espionage buildings, you may place them behind any of your buildings. If you have no buildings at all, your agents do not ready.

Finally, return the current month token to the box. At the end of the fourth month, Catherine the Great arrives, ending the game. Calculate final scores and determine a winner!

## END OF THE GAME

At the end of the game players total up their points. Players score points in the following way:

- 2 points for each fake building in their village
- 2 points for each Government Facade in their village
- 1 point for each Culture Facade in their village
- 2 points for each Interior card under their Mode token. These are the buildings they destroyed during the game.
- 1 point for each resource cube behind buildings in their village

The player with the most points wins. Catherine invests a fortune into your village to make it the most beautiful and productive city in the country.

If there is a tie, the tied player with the most fake buildings wins. If there is still a tie, the player closest to the capitol meeples in turn order wins.

### EXAMPLE

On Bob's turn, he chooses to produce resources. He places one resource cube in each of his three Industry buildings. Then, he flips his Mode token to the Production side.





# ACTION OVERVIEW

If the scientist meeple is in your village, draw one additional Interior card from the deck before choosing an action.



## ACTION

## EFFECT

### CONSTRUCT A BUILDING:

Choose what building type you are constructing by combining one Facade card with an Interior card in your hand and place them in your play area.

(See **Construct a Building** on page 4 for more info.)

*Note: An Interior card is used as a building OR for its card action, not both.*



### SPY WITH AGENTS:

Use any number of your ready agents to check on opponents' buildings by placing them in front of the buildings you want to check. Then, resolve each agent one at a time. Fake buildings are returned to the supply. You keep the Interior card under your Mode token to score 2 points at the end of the game. Real buildings are revealed for everyone to see.

(See **Spy with Agents** on page 6 for more info.)



### PRODUCE RESOURCES:

Place one resource behind each of your Industry buildings. If you are not already in Production Mode, flip your Mode token to "Production."

(See **Produce Resources** on page 7 for more info.)



### PLAY A CARD ABILITY:

Play an Interior card with an ACTION or FREE ACTION ability from your hand. Resolve the ability and place the card in the discard pile. If it is a "**FREE ACTION:**", you resolve another action this turn. You may play multiple "**FREE ACTION:**" cards in a turn in this way.

*Note: An Interior card is used as a building OR for its card action, not both.*

(See **Play a Card Ability** on page 5 for more info.)



While in *Construction Mode*, available actions are: **construct a building**, **play a card ability**, **spy with agents**, and **produce resources**.

While in *Production Mode*, available actions are: **play a card ability** and **produce resources**.

Once in *Production Mode*, you cannot return to *Construction Mode* during this Action phase. You will only switch back during the End phase.

## Dedicated to Brian McCarthy

### Credits

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