INSTRUCTION MANUAL

AREA51

SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

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ALWAYS ___ AT ALL TIME LOCK THE SECURITY DOORS WHEN LEAVING THE RESTRICTED AREA.

Welcome to the 1950's USA – the era of big cars, rock 'n' roll, and rampant alien activity!
To prevent mass panic, the US military has ordered its top generals (you and your fellow players) to collect all evidence of aliens and store it in Area 51, a secret military base in the remote Nevada desert.
You'll need to build specialized bunkers for the advanced tools, futuristic weapons, biological samples and alien clothing. Bunkers can only hold certain types of artifacts, and they will need to be upgraded if you want to hold the most advanced and dangerous artifacts. You can also hire trucks or trains that allow artifacts to be re-routed to different regions and different bunkers.
At the end of the game, the player whose bunkers have loaded the most valuable artifacts will be the winner.

COMPONENTS

3 curved road pieces and
1 triangular middle piece
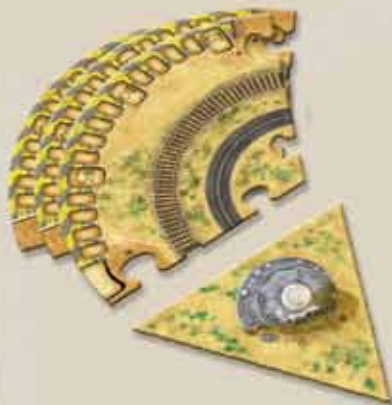
3 double-sided game board pieces

104 alien artifact cards
and 6 reference cards

Game pieces in 6 colours
(1 scoring marker and
5 tower caps)

60 security markers

Numbered markers for trains/trucks
(7x1/2, 6x3/4, 6x5/6 and 5x7/8)

20 storage towers
(5 each in 4 colours)

4 trucks and 4 trains

BOARD

• **Set up the board** in the middle of the table. Each rectangular board piece has a small region on one side (with five building spaces), and a large region on the other (with eight building spaces). Flip each board over to the large or small side, so that the **number of player icons** (the symbols in the top left of each board) is **equal to the number of players**. (A)

SECURITY MARKERS

• Put the **security markers** onto the **indicated spots** in each region - the small regions get 11, and the large regions get 17. Put the **leftover** security markers (that weren't put into stacks) **back in the box**. (B)

TOWERS

• Next, **remove towers based on the number of players** - put the removed towers **back in the box**.
• three players: remove two blue towers, two brown towers, two orange towers and one green tower
• four and five players: remove one blue, one brown and one orange tower
• six players: don't remove any towers
Put the **remaining towers in the middle** of the board (stack towers to save space). (C)

TRUCKS AND TRAINS

• Put the **trucks and trains** off to the side of the board, and put the numbered markers next to the them. (D)

ARTIFACT CARDS

• Look through the deck and **remove all the starting artifacts** (the cards with "S" on them). You now have a **starting deck** (all starting cards) and a **main deck** (the remaining regular cards). **Shuffle the starting deck**, and deal **five starting artifacts to each** player. Players hold their artifacts in their hand, making sure others can't see them.
• Next, from the **starting deck**, **take artifacts** (24 with three players, 16 with four players, eight with five players, and none with six players) and **shuffle them back into the main deck**. Finally, with both decks face-down, put the **remaining starting deck on top of the main deck**, and put that entire deck face-down next to the board. (E)
Turn over the **top six artifacts face-up** next to the deck (as shown in the diagram above). (F)

Setup for four players

PIECES

• Each player takes the **pieces in their colour** (five tower caps, reference card, and scoring marker).
• Each player puts his **scoring marker on the starting spot** on the scoring track. (G)

STARTING PLAYER

• The player with the **longest finger** goes first.

STRATEGY TIP: *The starting artifacts are mostly 1s and 2s, with a few 3s.*
The artifacts in the main deck (which come into play a bit later) are mostly 3s and 4s.

Players	Boards	Remove Towers	Starting artifacts to each player	Starting artifacts back into main deck
3	Flip over boards so = # players	2 blue, 2 brown, 2 orange, 1 green	5	24
4		1 blue, 1 brown, 1 orange		16
5		1 blue, 1 brown, 1 orange		8
6		use all towers		0

GAMEPLAY

On your turn, you must **choose one of four** possible actions.
Then the next player in clockwise order takes his turn.

• COLLECT THREE NEW ARTIFACTS

• PLAY ARTIFACTS TO CREATE OR UPGRADE A BUNKER

• PLAY ARTIFACTS TO ADD (OR MOVE) A TRUCK OR TRAIN

• PICK UP A PILE OF ARTIFACTS AND LOAD THEM

COLLECT THREE NEW ARTIFACTS.

*There are **four categories of artifacts** that players will encounter (advanced tools, futuristic weapons, biological samples, and alien clothing).*

*They're **numbered 1-4** to show how dangerous they are (and therefore what **security level** is **needed to store** them).*

• First, if you don't like the face-up cards, you may (optionally) **discard one artifact** from your hand (discards go face-up next to the deck), **discard the six face-up artifacts**, then turn over six new artifacts from the deck. You may only do this once per turn.

• Next, to collect new artifacts, take **three artifact cards** (from the six face-up cards, or the top of the deck, or any combination), and put them into your hand.

There is **no hand limit.**

• If the deck runs out, shuffle the discards and put them face-down to form a new deck.

• Once you're done, turn over new ones from the deck until there are **six artifacts face-up again**.

PLAY ARTIFACTS TO CREATE OR UPGRADE A BUNKER.

Create one New Bunker

*Bunkers let you **store artifacts**. You **score points** when an artifact is stored in one of your bunkers. Due to the dangerous nature of the artifacts, they are stored deep underground. Only the small guard tower is visible above ground, which provides security and access control.*

• To create a new bunker (new bunkers always start with one security level), play **one artifact face-up** (the same colour as the bunker you want to create), and **one artifact face-down** (of any colour). The numbers on the artifacts don't matter for this action.

• Artifacts are played **in the region where you want to add the bunker**. **Split the artifacts any way** you want between the hangars in that region (the way you split them can impact scoring, though). Play them **slightly overlapping** so you can see each card.

• Next, take a **tower from the middle** (remember, the **same colour as the face-up artifact** you played), and a **security marker** from the supply in that region. Place them **on the highest-numbered empty space** in the region where you played your artifacts. Naturally, there must be an empty space in that region, and a security marker available in that region, and a tower of the right colour available. Place a **tower cap in your colour on top** of the tower to mark the bunker as yours.

Example: The white player places one "orange 2" artifact face-up and one artifact face-down in the left hangar. (1)

He places one orange tower, one security marker and a white tower cap on the highest-numbered empty space. (2)

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Add one Additional Level to a Bunker

*Bunkers can only store artifacts with numbers equal to (or lower than) their security level. So **to store more dangerous artifacts**, you need to upgrade the security level of your bunkers.*

• To add an **additional security level** to a bunker you own, you need **one face-up artifact** (which can be any number, but must be the **same colour as the tower**), and **face-down artifacts equal to the level you're building**. The face-down artifacts can be **any colour or number**. There must be a security marker available in that region.

• A **second** level is **one face-up artifact** and **two face-down artifacts**.
• A **third** level is **one face-up artifact** and **three face-down artifacts**.
• A **fourth** level is **one face-up artifact** and **four face-down artifacts**.
etc.

• Remember all artifacts must be played **in the region** where the bunker is located, and you can **split them in any way between the hangars** in that region.

• The main point of upgrading bunkers is so that they can store more dangerous (and higher-valued) artifacts, so you score more points (explained on the next page). You can **upgrade bunkers as high as you want**, however there are no artifacts with a number higher than 4, so a **level 4 bunker is all you need** to store the most dangerous artifacts. Also, note there are **no level 4 green artifacts** (see the reference card for the artifacts in each colour), so a **level 3 green tower is all you need** to store the most dangerous green artifacts. However building higher-level bunkers can help you get a few more points at the end of the game with the **highest bunker scoring**.

Example: The white player places one „orange 1" artifact face-up in the left hangar and one artifact face-down in the right hangar. (1)

He adds one one security marker to the orange tower with the white tower cap. (2)

*Trains and trucks both work exactly the same way – during the "pick up and store" action, they allow **all players** (not just the player who placed it) to **re-route artifacts of that colour** to the region the train/truck is pointing to.*

Create a New Train or Truck

• To create a new train or truck, you play artifacts in the region it's departing from (not the region it's facing). Play **one face-up artifact** (the **same colour as the train or truck** you want), and **one to eight face-down artifacts** (of **any colour**). The numbers on the artifacts don't matter for this action. Then place the train on a track (or the truck on a road) **facing away from the region** where you played the artifacts. The actual location of the train/truck on the road or track doesn't matter, but just for clarity it should be as close as possible to the region it's facing out of. There's **no limit to the number of trains/trucks** on a track or road.

• Next, place a **numbered marker next to the train/truck**, showing the **total number of face-down artifacts** you played. For example, if you played one face-up green artifact and one face-down artifact, you would place a green train or truck and a "1" numbered marker next to it. If you played one face-up orange artifact and three face-down artifacts, you would place an orange train or truck and a "3" numbered marker next to it.

Example: A player places one "green" artifact face-up and three artifacts face-down in the left hangar. (1)
He places a green truck with a „3" numbered marker on the road facing left.

Move an Existing Train or Truck

• If the train or truck you want is **already on the board**, you **can move** it to a new location, but you **must raise the numbered marker by at least one**. For example, if there is a green train with a "4" numbered marker, you can move it, but you must play one face-up green artifact and at least five additional face-down artifacts. If the train or truck has an **"8" numbered marker** (the maximum), it **cannot be moved**.

Remember the artifacts are played **in the new region** the train/truck is now departing from.

• You can also choose to **upgrade the number** on a train or truck, **keeping it where it is.** For example, if there is a blue train with a "1" numbered marker, you could play one face-up blue artifact, and four face-down artifacts, and change the numbered marker to a "4".

• If the numbered **marker you want isn't available**, you can **substitute two other numbers** (for example, use a 4 and a 2 in place of a 6). However you still **can't exceed 8**.

PICK UP A PILE OF ARTIFACTS AND LOAD THEM INTO BUNKERS.

*The "pick up and load" action **scores points for all players** (although the player who performs the action gets a bit of control over who scores what), and usually **yields some extra artifacts** for the player who performs the action.*

• When taking this action, **put down your hand of artifacts** (face-down on the table in front of you), and **pick up a pile of artifacts from any hangar**. You must pick up **all** the artifacts – you can't leave any behind. Turn all the artifacts facing up, **sort them by colour**, and hold them so all players can see.

Example: A player picks up the right pile of artifacts. (1) He turns them all face-up, sorts them by colour, and holds them out for all players to see. (2)

• Next, you must **try to load each artifact** into a bunker. There are **five rules for loading artifacts**:

1. Same Region. Artifacts are loaded into bunkers in the region where they were picked up.

2. Same Colour, Same (or higher) Level. Artifacts go into bunkers of the same colour, and the same (or higher) security level.
Example: an "orange 3" artifact can only be stored in an orange bunker with three or more security markers.

3. One Artifact. Each bunker can only accept one artifact during each "pick up and load" action.

4. Must Store. If a player can store an artifact, he must.
However if there is **more than one bunker** where an artifact can be stored, the **player can choose**. He can also choose the order they're stored in. These can make a big difference.

5. Trains and Trucks Re-route Artifacts. Trains and trucks allow an unlimited number of **artifacts of that colour** to be re-routed to bunkers in the region the train/truck is pointing to.
The bunker in the other region must still be the **correct colour and level**. It doesn't matter who placed the train/truck, **and the number token doesn't matter** (a green train with a "1" numbered token can still re-route a "green 3" artifact).
Players must store artifacts if possible, even if it means using a train/truck. An artifact can only be **re-routed once** (so it can't be re-routed to a region, and then re-routed again on a different train or truck).

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• When an artifact is loaded into a bunker, the **player who owns the bunker scores** the value of the artifact (one-four points). Move that player's **scoring marker** up the scoring track.

• The **player who loads** the artifact **scores nothing** (unless it's his bunker, of course).

• **Stored artifacts are discarded** face-up next to the deck in a discard pile — **artifacts that cannot be stored are added to your hand** of artifacts.

Example of a "pick up artifacts and load" action:

• *The white player puts his hand of artifacts face-down in front of him, and picks up all seven artifacts from a hangar in the bottom region.*

• *He turns them all over and shows all the players. Now, he must try to load each artifact into a bunker in the bottom region.*

• *The "brown 2" artifact cannot be loaded anywhere, since there are no brown bunkers in that region, and no brown trains or trucks leading out of that region. So he adds that artifact to his hand of cards (which is face-down in front of him). (A)*

• *There is a "blue 2" and "blue 1" artifact. The white player could store the "blue 1" in pink's bunker, and the "blue 2" in his own bunker (using the blue truck), or vice versa. Naturally, he chooses to store the "blue 1" artifact in the pink player's "level 3 blue" bunker, giving the pink player one point. (B)*
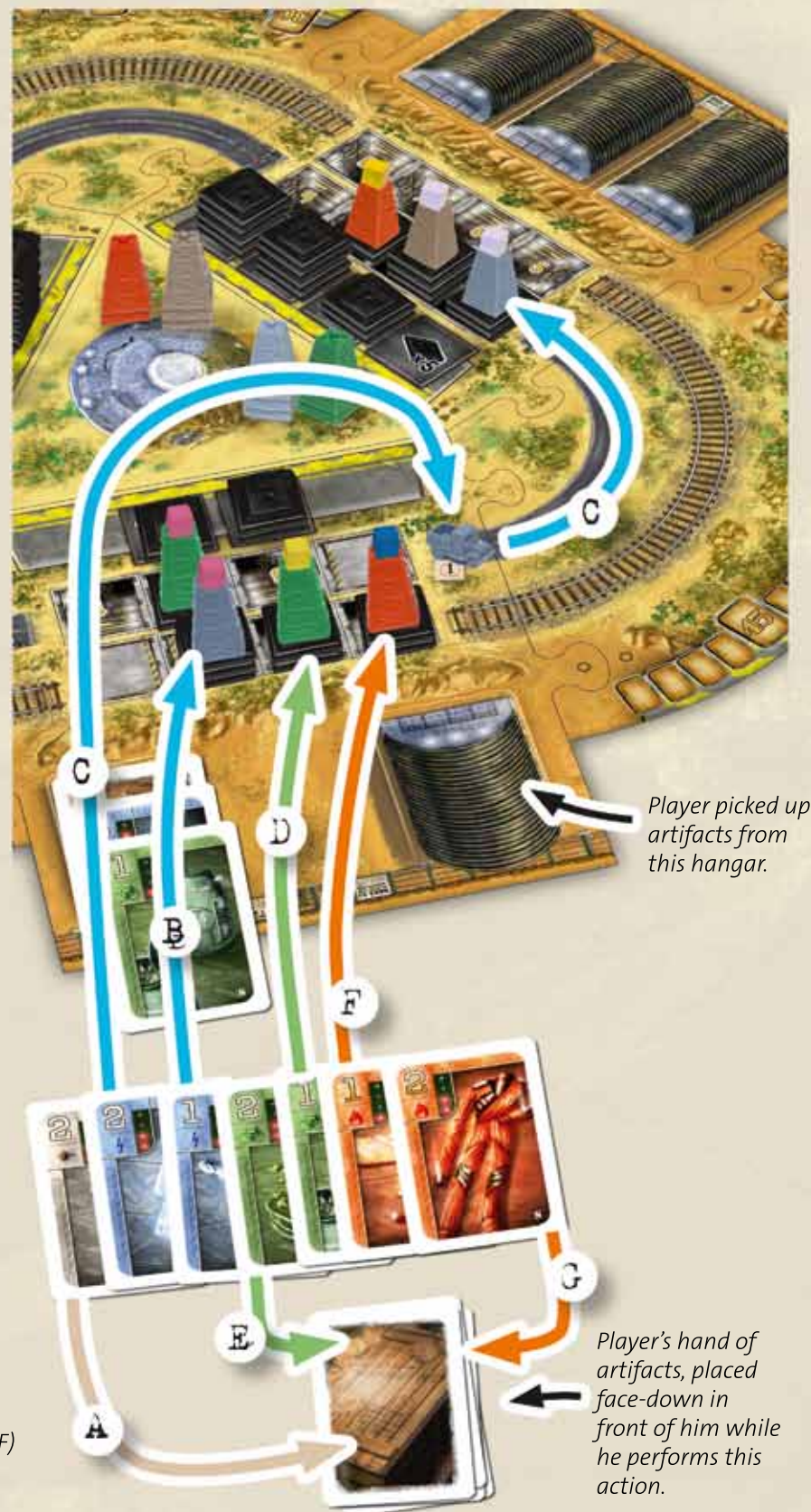
• *He re-routes the "blue 2" artifact (using the blue truck) to the other region, storing it in his "level 2 blue" bunker, and gives himself two points. Both blue artifacts were loaded, so both are discarded. (C)*

• *Next, the white player could load the "green 2" artifact into the yellow player's "level 2 green" bunker, and the "green 1" artifact into the pink player's "level 1 green" bunker. However, a smarter move is to load the "green 1" artifact into the yellow player's bunker, giving yellow one point. The "green 1" artifact is discarded. (D)*

• *Now the "green 2" artifact cannot be stored anywhere, and goes back into his hand. (E)*
This is a very important distinction - you're forced to load an artifact if you can, but you're not forced to maximize the number of loaded artifacts. Loading artifacts in different bunkers, and in different orders, can greatly affect the outcome.

• *Finally, he must store either the "orange 1" or "orange 2" artifact in the blue player's "level 2 orange" bunker. Naturally, he chooses the "orange 1", giving the blue player one point, and discards that artifact. (F)*

• *The "orange 2" cannot be stored and goes into his hand. (G)*

Player picked up artifacts from this hangar.

Player's hand of artifacts, placed face-down in front of him while he performs this action.

END OF THE GAME

• When **2 regions** have **no security markers**, then **everyone gets one more regular turn** (including the player that took the security marker that triggered the end).

• Next, play continues, with **each player only able to take the fourth action** (pick up and store artifacts). Players **must** do this action. When all piles of artifacts are gone, the game ends.

• **In each region**, the **bunker with the highest security level** scores its owner **five points**, the **second-highest three points**, and the **third-highest two points**. If tied, the bunker on the **higher-numbered space wins the tie**, taking the higher points, and the loser of the tie gets the lower points.

• **The player with the highest score wins**. In case of a **tie**, the tied player with the **most artifacts in his hand** is the winner.

STRATEGY TIPS

• ***Don't create too many bunkers*** *- two to four is usually ideal. It's rare to need all five of your tower caps.*

• *The starting artifacts are mostly 1s and 2s, so you can score with level 1 and level 2 bunkers at the beginning. The level 3 and 4 artifacts come out later in the game, so you'll want **one or two higher-levelled bunkers to capture the higher points** (there are not usually enough markers for more than one or two higher-level bunkers).*

• *The four colours all have **different numbers of artifacts**, as shown on the reference cards. Each requires a different strategy.*

• *Don't worry if you don't score many points when you pick up a pile of artifacts – **most of your points will be scored during other player's turns**, when they're forced to store artifacts in your bunkers. Try to pick up when you can influence the outcome, or pick up a lot of cards.*

• ***When you play your face-down artifacts, think carefully*** *about where those artifacts will be loaded when someone picks up the pile.*

• *Don't forget you can **split your artifacts** among all two (or three) hangars in a region.*

TWO-PLAYER VARIANT RULES

In the two-player game, **each player gets two different colours of tower caps**, and each of his colours is **scored separarely**, but his **final score** is the **lowest of his two colours**.

SETUP

• Use the setup rules for a four-player game.

• One player takes the **pink and purple** playing pieces, and the other player takes the **black and white** playing pieces.

• Each player places their two scoring markers on the board (so there should be four scoring markers - two for each player) and keeps the tower caps in both their colours in front of them.

• Everthing else is the same (each player only gets five cards, and plays from a single hand of artifacts).

GAMEPLAY

• Each player can **use either of his colours** when building new towers.

• **Each colour scores separately**.

• Everything else is the same (each player can only take one action on his turn).

END OF THE GAME

At the end of the game, the lower of a player's two scores is his final score.

CREDITS

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Area 51 comes from the first game design competition run by www.spielmaterial.de. The task was to create new games with a defined set of game pieces (in this case the oil rigs, the transportation vehicles and the black markers), while also adding anything else needed/wanted. Area 51 is the sixth game published from this competition, all of which are part of the Edition Bohrtürme (edition oil rigs).
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