Mars Horizon: Blast Off!

(Draft 18/02/19)

Game Summary

Mars Horizon is a game about the space race and, ultimately, the race to Mars. Whichever Agency plants the first boots on the red planet wins the race, and the game!

The aim of the game is to win the space race by completing the first crewed mission to Mars, helping humanity becoming a multiplanetary species.
To achieve this you'll be running a space agency, growing and directing it to design and build rockets then launching them on missions. Missions can give you Prestige, Money and Research. These can then be used to advance your space agency ever onwards and upwards until it is ready to undertake the ultimate mission; putting people.0 on Mars

Game Contents

Cards:

55 Agency Cards (15x Era 1, 15x Era 2, 25x General)
7 Milestone Cards (3x Era 1, 4x Era 2)
20 Launch Cards
4 HQ cards

Tokens:

50 Money Tokens 🪙 (30x $1, 10x $3, 10x $5)

40 Research Tokens 🧪 (20x R1, 10x R3, 10x R5)

10 Blueprint Tokens 🔷

30 Prestige Tokens (20x P1, 10x P3) ⭐

Agency Tokens (6x 4 different colours) 🔶🔴🟢

Dice:

2 six sided dice

Components

Milestone Cards

Completing **Milestones** is the main objective of Mars Horizon: Blast Off!

Each Milestone card has a **Mission Destination** and a **Payload Size**. This shows what kind of rocket is needed to complete it.

The example shows an *Earth* mission with a payload size of 2, which can be summarised as an *Earth 2* mission.

Rockets can complete missions with a lower or equal requirement, but not higher.
For example: an *Earth 2* Vehicle can complete *Earth 1* Milestones, but not *Earth 3* ones.

Milestone Cards have two different **Mission Profiles**, The first is for the **Milestone Mission** and the second for **Repeat Missions**.
Each Mission Profile shows a target score and a reward:
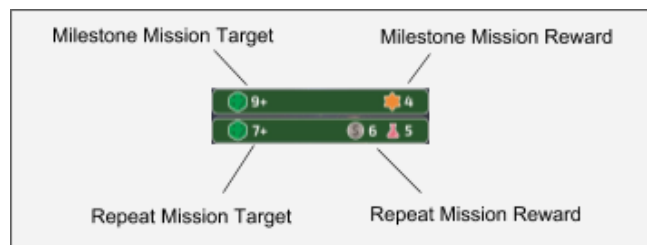
Until a Milestone has been claimed players will use the **Milestone** Mission Profile. In this case:

The first player to complete a **Milestone Mission** claims it by putting one of their **Agency Tokens** ( ) on the card to mark that they have completed it, and earns the Milestone Reward, usually **Prestige** ( ), shown on the **Milestone** Mission Profile.

Players can attempt a Milestone at any time after it has been claimed by a player, but all subsequent attempts use the second profile, for example:

🟢 7+   💲 6 🧪 5

Missions to claimed Milestones are called **Repeat Missions**. Repeat missions are easier but will only give 💲 or 🧪 rewards.

If a Mission reward shows two different resources, the player who completes it must choose only one of the rewards shown, they don't get both. For example, a player completing a mission that shows 💲 6 🧪 5 as rewards must choose *EITHER* 💲 6 *OR* 🧪 5 .
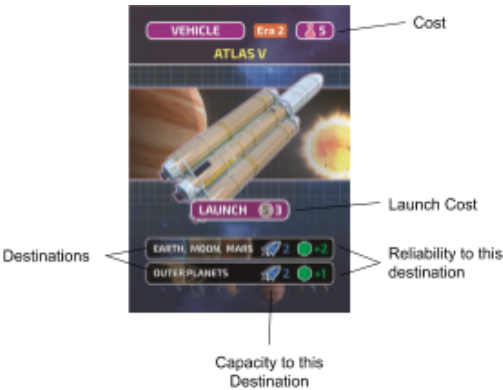
Agency Cards

Agency Cards are bought from the pool in the centre, and have different effects and conditions depending on their type.
Most agency cards have a cost, shown at the top of the card, which must be paid before claiming the card.
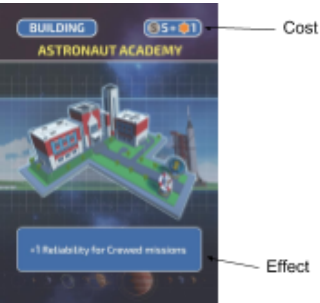
Buildings

Buildings are placed face up in front of the player that bought them. Their effects only apply to their owner.

Vehicle Designs

**Vehicle Designs** are placed face up in front of the player that bought them.

Until a Vehicle Design is first launched it can only be used by the player who owns it.

To represent this, place a **Blueprint** 🔵 token on it to represent that it cannot be used by other players.

When a vehicle is first launched by its owner the Blueprint

token is removed. That vehicle is now available for other players to use.

Vehicles have a **Reliability** rating, e.g. ⬡+2 which acts as a bonus to the dice roll when you **Launch** a mission. Reliability is shown for each destination the vehicle can reach.
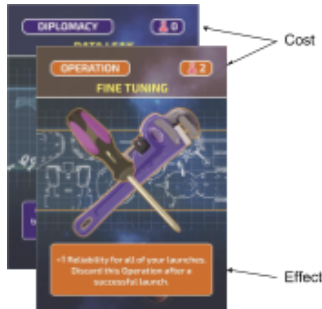
Operations & Diplomacy

Operations & **Diplomacy** cards have their effects applied immediately. Some will remain in play until a given time, and others are discarded immediately after they're bought.

If an Operation or Diplomacy card remains in play, it is placed face up on the table in front of the player that bought it until it is discarded.

BOXOUT
Some cards have additional costs or requirements in their Effect text.
If this cannot be fulfilled immediately, the card cannot be bought.

For example, the **Licensed Tech** card requires the player buying

the card to give one other player 2 $. If they do not have

enough, this card cannot be picked up.

Missions

Mission cards allow you to conduct extra missions to earn Prestige outside the normal milestones.

Missions work almost identically to Milestones: They include a **Destination** and **Capacity**, and players must launch rockets to claim them.

Once a Mission has been successfully attempted and the reward claimed, the card is discarded.

Playing the Game

Introduction

A game of Mars Horizon is played over a number of short turns. On your turn you'll either buy a card to build up your Agency or launch a Mission using a Vehicle Design you've bought or loaned from another player.

The aim of the game is to complete Milestones, key moments in the space race, with the winner being the first player to complete the final milestone: Landing on Mars.

Setup

1. Give each player a **HQ** card, 4 💲 and 3 🧪 tokens, and all the Agency tokens of one colour, and place all the other tokens within easy reach of all players.
2. Place the **Milestone** cards for **Era 1** on the table, left-to-right in order.
3. Separate the **Agency Cards** into three piles: Era 1, Era 2 and non-era cards. Gather all the **Era 1** cards, shuffle in 10, random, **non-era** Agency cards. This is your **Agency Deck** for this Era.
4. Deal 8 cards from the Agency Deck face up into the centre of the table and place the rest of deck face down in easy reach.
5. The player who most recently watched a rocket launch takes the first turn.

The Turn

- Each player, in turn, takes the following steps:
  1. Choose *one* of the following:
     - Buy an **Agency Card** from the centre by paying its cost, and draw a new card to replace it.
     - Attempt a **Mission**
     - Or **Pass** your turn

  2. Take **Income**: either 2 💲 or 2 🧪
  3. Play then moves to the player on their left, and so on

Buying an Agency Card

To buy a card from the centre pay the 💲 , ⚗️ or ⭐ cost, shown [at the top right of the card.] and either place on the table in front of you or immediately resolve the effect described on the card. See the *Components* section for more details on each card.

Whenever you buy a card replace it with a card from the Agency Deck, so that there are always 8 cards face up in the centre.

Launching a Mission

Players can launch Missions to Milestone cards or Mission cards.

1. Choose a **Milestone** or **Mission** to attempt.
   - A Milestone can only be attempted if all previous milestones have been completed.
   - If a Milestone has been claimed, any player can attempt it but must use the second Mission Profile.
2. Choose a **Vehicle Design** that meets the **Destination** and **Capacity** requirements for the mission. Note that you can use other players vehicle designs, as long as they do not have a Blueprint 🔷 token.
   - A Vehicle can reach any **Destination** closer than its max destination, For example, a Vehicle that can reach *Mars* can also complete *Earth* and *Moon* missions.
   - The Vehicle **Capacity** must be equal to or larger than the capacity requirement on the Milestone card. For example: a Moon [2] Vehicle can launch to missions of Moon [2] and Moon [1], but not Moon [3] or Earth [3]
3. Find the Mission Target, e.g. 🟢 9+
   - Note that Milestone cards have two target scores, one for the Milestone itself and the other for Repeat Missions
4. Work out the total **Reliability** of the Vehicle, taking into account the Vehicle itself (e.g. 🟢+2) and adding any effects from Agency cards.
   - *Optional:* You can Spend **Prestige** ⭐ tokens to increase reliability. Players may spend either 1 Prestige to gain a +1 Reliability bonus, or 3 Prestige to gain +2.
5. Pay the Launch Cost, as shown on the Vehicle card.
   - If the Vehicle Design belongs to another player, give that player an additional $1 on top of the usual launch cost payed to the bank.

6. **3… 2… 1...** While counting down from 3, draw three cards from the **Launch deck**, one at a time, resolving each before drawing the next, including adding or removing any bonuses or penalties to your Reliability.

7. **Launch!** Roll the dice to launch! If the roll, plus your final **Reliability** equals or beats the Target, the Mission is a success!
   ○ If the mission was a Milestone, place one of your Agency tokens on that milestone, and gain Prestige as shown on the card. That mission is now available for any player to attempt as a Repeat mission.
   ○ If the mission was a Repeat mission, choose either the Research or Money reward shown on the Repeat mission section of the card.
   ○ If the launch Failed, gain [1 Research]. Even a failed mission can provide useful information!

Solo Mode

Mars Horizon: Blast Off! can be played solo too!

Please note: This mode is in early development, but will be updated soon. Keep an eye on the Kickstarter for updates!

In solo mode, you play turns as normal, but each time you take an action the clock ticks on, making every decision vital!
The main solo play mode will be Historical mode, where you race against history and try to beat major milestones from the Space Race.