

YUGANTA

A Card Game of the Mahabharata

PLAYER'S GUIDE — HOW TO PLAY

Version 1.0 | August 2026

Full rules for tournament and rules-committee use are available in the
Yuganta Core Rulebook. This guide covers everything you need to play your first game.

Welcome to Yuganta

Two players. Two decks. One war retold.

Yuganta is a strategy card game set in the world of the Mahabharata. You lead a mythic faction — the Pandavas, the Kauravas, or a future army of your own choosing — and win through **merit** or **conquest**. Every card, every rule, is drawn from the epic itself.

THE SHORT VERSION

Each player starts with a **Kingdom of 20**. You win by reducing your opponent's Kingdom to 0, **or** by being the first to earn **21 Punya** (merit) through completing sacred rituals. Both paths are always open — you choose your road.

What You Need

- One complete 50-card Yuganta deck per player (e.g. the Pandava deck or the Kaurava deck)
- A way to track: **Kingdom** (starts at 20), **Dharma** (starts at 0, ranges −10 to +10), **Punya** (starts at 0), and **Mantra** (your resource, starts at 0)
- A marker for the **Yuga Track** (four ages — explained below)

The Four Things You're Managing

Currency	What it does
Mantra	Your resource. Spend it to play cards. You gain some every turn.
Punya	Your merit score. Reach 21 and you win instantly. Earned mainly by completing rituals.
Dharma	Your moral standing, from −10 to +10. Some of your best cards require a minimum (or maximum) Dharma to play.
Kingdom	Your life total. Starts at 20. Reach 0 and you lose.

Setting Up

- 1 Shuffle your deck. Your opponent may cut it.
- 2 Set both Kingdoms to 20, both Dharma to 0, both Punya to 0, both Mantra to 0. Place the Yuga marker on **Satya**, the first age.
- 3 Decide who goes first (flip a coin, roll a die — your choice). The first player skips their first card draw. The second player starts with 1 free Mantra as compensation.
- 4 Each player draws a hand of 5 cards. You may take a mulligan once: shuffle your hand back in and draw 4 instead.

Your Turn — Four Phases

DAWN — Gain Mantra (2, plus bonuses). Untap your cards. Draw a card.

SABHA — Your main phase. Play characters, weapons, rituals, and spells, in any order, as long as you can pay for them. You may start at most one new ritual this turn.

YUDDHA — Your combat phase. Attack with any of your ready characters.

SANDHYA — Your end phase. Rituals you're tending advance one step (and pay out if finished). Discard down to 8 cards if you have more. Pass the turn.

Playing Characters

Every character has two numbers: **Bala** (strength) and **Prana** (health). A character just played cannot attack that same turn, unless it has the **Swift** keyword.

Some of your strongest characters — Heroes and Legends — require a minimum or maximum **Dharma** to play. Check the small print on the card: "Dharma Gate $\geq$ 3" means your Dharma must be 3 or higher at the moment you play it.

Combat

- When you attack, choose a target:
- **An enemy character** — this is a direct duel. Both sides deal damage to each other at the same time, based on their Bala. If a character's damage reaches its Prana, it's destroyed.
 - **An enemy ritual** — your opponent's ritual takes damage instead of a character. But careful: attacking a ritual costs you 1 Dharma (more during the earliest age, less later — see the Yuga Track below).
 - **The enemy Kingdom directly** — damage comes straight off their life total.

THE ONE RULE TO REMEMBER

Attacks on a **ritual** or the **Kingdom** can be **intercepted** — your opponent may step an unengaged character in front of it. But a direct duel (attacking an enemy character) cannot be intercepted. This is what makes rituals defensible and characters dangerous to leave undefended.

Rituals — Your Path to Victory Through Merit

Yajna cards represent sacred rituals. To start one, you commit some of your characters to "tend" it — while committed, they cannot attack, but they're safe from direct attack too. Each ritual takes a number of turns to complete; when it does, it pays out **Punya** (and sometimes other bonuses).

If a ritual's Ritual HP is reduced to 0 by enemy attacks before it finishes, it's broken — no payout, and your opponent gains a small reward instead. Protect your rituals, or race to finish them before they can be broken.

The Yuga Track — The Game's Clock

As turns pass, the game moves through four mythic ages. Each one changes the rules slightly, pushing the game toward its climax so no one can simply wait forever:

Age	Effect
Satya (turns 1-3)	The age of truth. Rituals are hardest to attack (costs 2 Dharma).

Treta (turns 4-6)	Standard rules. Attacking a ritual costs 1 Dharma.
Dvapara (turns 7-9)	Attackers get stronger (+1 Bala). Rituals pay slightly less Punya.
Kali (turn 10+)	Attackers surge (+2 Bala). Rituals pay even less. Attacking a ritual is free.

The message of the Yuga Track: the longer the game goes, the more it favors the sword over the altar. Plan accordingly.

Winning the Game

- **Path of Conquest:** Reduce your opponent's Kingdom to 0.
- **Path of Merit:** Be the first to reach 21 Punya.
- If both would happen at once, Conquest wins first. If both players would win or lose at the same instant, whoever has the **higher Dharma** wins the game.



Quick Reference — Your First Game Cheat Sheet

Every Turn

Dawn (draw, gain Mantra) → Sabha (play cards) → Yuddha (attack) → Sandhya (rituals advance, discard to 8)

Remember

- New characters can't attack the turn they're played
- You can start only 1 ritual per turn
- Committed characters can't attack or be attacked directly

Combat Targets

- Character = duel, no blocking
- Ritual = can be intercepted, costs you Dharma
- Kingdom = can be intercepted, direct damage

Winning

Kingdom to 0, or first to 21 Punya.

This guide covers the essentials for your first games. For complete rules, edge-case rulings, and tournament play, download the full Yuganta Core Rulebook from the same page you found this guide.