



A House Divided

2+ player variant



Family is important, but the annals of medieval noble conflict are rife with both familial loyalty and bloody internecine struggles. Children struggling against parents, siblings working against each other, cousins at war. While the house that you all hail from is the greatest in the kingdom, now you must determine who will rule it.

In this simple variant one half of everyone's Earl deck is identical to all other Earl decks in the struggle. After all, you all hail from the same great household, and so have many of the same resources, skills, and retainers to call on.

A Common Deck Landscape

All players will create their own unique Earl deck using **12 common cards**.

A **single** player will be selected at random to choose what those 12 common cards are, and all decks will **have** to include these 12 cards. The remaining 12 cards will be selected by individual Earls, in secret, as is normally done.

Use the Viking **bag** to determine who will have the chance to define the nature of your family's common holding.

That player will take their full Earl card tray... and lay out 12 cards face-up on the table. All other players will then duplicate this by placing out, from their wooden card trays, the same 12 cards.

Once this is done all players then secretly select the 12 missing cards of their 24 card Earl gameplay deck.

The 12 selected cards and the 12 public and face-up cards of each deck are then mated together and shuffled into each Earls' deck.

Note, it is best to do a second Viking bag draw, once decks have been created, to determine who the starting player will be in the normal manner. Rather than simply having the same player who selected the 12 common cards also knowing that they are going to be the first player.

Gameplay Notes:

As you can imagine, the trick in A House Divided is to puzzle out how to use the 12 cards that were selected to be held in common to your best advantage.

Because there is a very large number of 12 card combinations that can be chosen, it is possible you will rarely if ever see the same puzzle occur twice.

This landscape of common holding should be approached in a couple ways. First, it will likely nudge other Earls to build a complete deck to play to its strengths. But secondarily, this can also give you an idea of what kind of deck strategies they will likely be drawn to. Thirdly, the 12 cards themselves will have some strengths and weaknesses that cannot be avoided.

Overall, fighting within the family both limits your flexibility while at the same time providing more information about what and who you will be facing in the struggle.

