



# Thanes Variant

Additional struggle variant for 2+ players,  
best with 3-4 players



*This world is not only made up of nobles and their ilk. The vast majority of the Anglo-Saxons lived in the common villages of the land, where most of the resources of the kingdom also resided. This is the often overlooked heart of Anglo-Saxon society, and you can take advantage of it by sending out strong and capable commoners to hold sway in the shires on your behalf.*

## Victory conditions:

Normal Ortus Regni victory conditions apply.



## Thanes (colored cubes):

Each Earl starts the game with 10 of their colored cubes. These are their Thanes. Anglo-Saxon bully-boys who can control the villages of the Kingdom's shires.

Earls can send them out into the shires of the kingdom to further their efforts to rule the land.

## Overview of Thanes gameplay

- Earls push out or pull back their Thanes as a **free** action during their turn.
- Earls can choose to **Attack** (target) the Thanes of another Earl that are **out** in the shires.
- At the start of your turn, if you have **more** Thanes out than any other Earl you control the shires and may use the special **Thanes Action**, if you wish.
- When using the **Thanes Action** you can pull **any** card that is left in your full Earl card set (your tray) into your Hand. This costs you your Action that turn.

## Thanes usage rules:

All Earls start with 10 Thane cubes. Thanes can be killed in battle when targeted.

You **cannot** push Thanes out on your very **first** turn. This is similar, and related, to the rule that you also cannot Attack on your first turn.

During your turn you can push out or pull back Thanes as you wish. This does not cost you your Action; this works in a similar fashion to Towering, or placing Army cards in Garrison slots.

If at the **very start** of your turn you have more Thanes out than any other Earl you can choose to use the special **Thanes Action**.

Note that even if you are lucky enough to take advantage of this power you can still pull back all your Thanes, after using the Thanes action, before the end of your turn. They are not stuck out there, even if you take advantage of their control at the start of your turn.

There is no penalty if you lose all 10 of your Thanes. But you cannot create more Thanes either.

## Thanes battle rule:



A new Attack type is available in this variant.

You can now **target** another Earl's Towers, or Raid one of their Fiefs, or Siege one of their Castles or Palaces... and now you can also declare an Attack on the **Thanes** of another Earl that are "out in the shires."

After declaring an attack on an Earl's Thanes, and fielding your attacking forces, the defending Earl can then field their own forces in defense.

But Thanes are **not** protected by your **Towers**.

A Thanes Attack is similar in practice to attacking an Earl's Towers. Each point that gets **beyond** the fielded defending forces will remove a Thane from play: 1 damage point **removing** 1 Thane cube.

An Earl **can** direct the Vikings to attack another Earl's Thanes!

### Thanes special Action rule:



If at the **start** of your turn (i.e before you can use your free Action to push more Thanes out) you have **more** Thanes out than any other Earl then this special Action is available to you. Even if you only have a single Thane out, when no other Earl has any out, you win the struggle in the shires that turn and have this action available to you.

To utilize this power you must spend your single Action that turn.

You can go to your wooden card tray and select any single card you wish, and place it into your Hand.

Keep in mind that the cards that you built your 24 card Earl Deck with will not be available to you, as they will not be in your tray.

### Gameplay notes:

You can simply push Thane cubes out into the center of the table, when pushing them “into the shires.”

And you can store your pool of available Thanes in a pile to the right of our Earldom.

When Thanes are removed in battle, you can allow

the attacker to keep those cubes as a trophy.

Tactically, your total number of available Thanes is important. So long as everyone has an equal number of cubes this serves as a potential veto, to any other Earl who pushes Thanes out. But having a single Thane less than other Earls means that you cannot block them by simply pushing all your Thanes out.



The Thanes variant is also interesting because Earls who are in a corner, whether facing Bequeathing problems, or desperately in need of an Allies card, have an avenue that allows them to solve this problem.... if they can pull it off with their Thanes. Additionally the added target on the table that Thanes presents can be used to distract or misdirect strong Earls from your homelands.

In practice you will still have plenty of colored cubes left - the remaining 10 that are not Thanes - for use as Emissaries in the Viking Bag.

**Free Mulligan rule** – All Earls may reject their 5 card starting hand and reshuffle and redraw their hand once. This occurs just before play begins, in turn order, with each Earl taking a Mulligan, or not.

