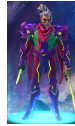


# The ProtonPrimer

## LORE

Welcome, **Broker**, to the big show! Things happen fast out there, so let's get you up to speed. From the (slightly) safer confines of your dropship, you'll pilot an **Agent** as they attempt to harvest **Shards** and/or secure the area from competing **Agents** via **Knockouts (KO)**. Those rivals are not the only dangers you'll encounter, though...



## LORE

**Shardstorms** are unpredictable, violent events that threaten to tear apart the very fabric of the **Firmament**. They produce an incredible natural resource (**Shards**) but also wreak havoc on physical matter, including terrain, and probably have many more unknown effects yet to be discovered. We also know **shardstorms** interfere with and even interrupt communications systems, including those used by yourself and your **Agent**. Your **turn** is divided into two **phases** - a **Power Up Phase** followed by a **Battle Phase**.

## GAMEPLAY

During your **Power Up Phase**, you'll interface with your **Agent** through the **Skill Map**. You can purchase **Skills**, prioritize **Attacking** or **Collecting** and establish a **damage** threshold that guides your **Agent** into knowing when to retreat. You'll have limited information about opposing **Broker/Agent** activity. The window to communicate with your **Agent** is short; you'll have to make decisions quickly!

During your **Battle Phase**, the **shardstorm** interrupts all communications and you'll watch your **Agent** interpret and execute the instructions you issued in the previous **phase**. Your opponents' activity during the previous **phase** is revealed, their **Agents** execute their respective instructions and you'll analyze this new data as you prepare for the next **round** (your next **turn**). All **Agents** will briefly pause at the same moment, when the shardstorm allows for communications to be restored (temporarily, of course,) and the next **turn** begins.



## LORE

## GAMEPLAY

**Agents** are not characters you play as, they are characters you partner with in order to accomplish a mutual objective. They perform independently – you do not directly control movement, attacks or collection. You influence or indirectly control these behaviors via the instructions issued during your **Power Up Phase** and cannot modify them during the **Battle Phase**. It is common to feel somewhat disconnected with your **Agent** at first, however along with gameplay experience (read: trial-and-error) comes a greater understanding of **Agent** behavior and soon the 'mind meld' takes hold. You will learn how to instruct your **Agent** to behave in more specific ways, more reliably. Think of yourself as a coach calling the play and your **Agent** as the player who executes it; the best coaches know how to scheme in any given situation and call plays that put their players in optimal positions to succeed!

## Your Turn

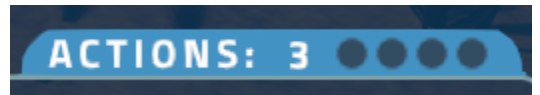
### LORE

**Shards** can't be harvested remotely, so your **Agent** must descend to the planet's surface. Initially, the terrain is heavily populated with **shards** – and even more are generated as the storm rages! Your first decision is selecting a location on the map where your **Agent** will drop, so quickly survey the area via scanner to obtain clues about where **shards** have already spawned. You might instinctively choose a 'hot spot' to ensure your **Agent** wastes little time starting the mission... but so might your opponents!

### GAMEPLAY

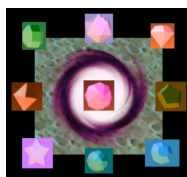


After **Agent** descension is complete and communications are established, your **Power Up Phase** begins. You start with 3 **Actions** each turn and use them to direct and develop your **Agent**. Whenever you **deploy** an **Element**, it consumes 1 **Action**.



The **shardstorm** provides a steady flow of **Elements**, the primary resource driving **Agent** development. Use these to invest in and purchase **Skills** that enhance or upgrade your **Agent's** abilities. **Deploying** them will

consume the specified lot – and, remember, an **Action** – then immediately resupply and redistribute the **Elements** up to your minimum amount. **Deploying 1 Element** yields an investment of 1; this scales with larger **Element Deploys**. 2 **Elements** yield an investment of 3, 3 **Elements** yield an investment of 6, 4 **Elements** yield an investment of 10 and so on in this triangular number sequence.

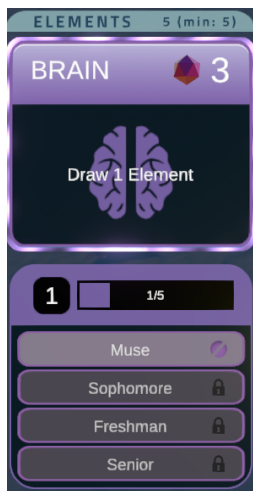


## Your Turn

**Shardstorms** are unpredictable, to say the least, so **Elements** are distributed randomly. **Deploying** them contributes towards **Skill** purchases while also providing a specific, repeatable *Temporary Effect* for the upcoming **Battle Phase**. All *Temporary Effects* revert at the beginning of your next **turn**.

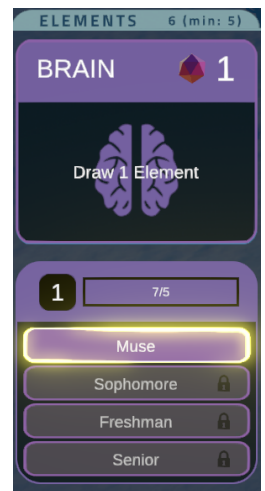


Currently, there are 9 total subsets of **Elements** but each **Agent** features exactly 6. Each subset offers different **Skills** in a variety of sequences; an **Agent** can purchase up to 4 of these **Skills** each game to 'level up' – also, each and every **Agent** is *globally unique*! A 'copy' of your **Agent** does not exist anywhere else throughout the **Firmament**!



With 3 **Elements** available in **BRAIN**, **deploying** them will result in:

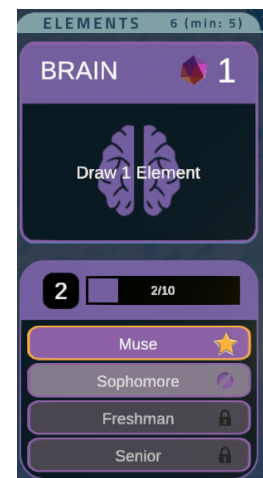
- consumption of 1 **Action**
- an investment of 6 (for a total of 7 )
- the “**Muse**” **Skill** becoming available for purchase
- redistribution (**draw**) of 3 **Elements** (because they were reduced that many below the minimum)
- an additional 1 **Element** is **drawn** (the *Temporary Effect* of a **BRAIN** deployment)



Select “**Muse**” to purchase the **Skill**. This does not consume an **Action**!

Excess investment is retained and applied towards the next **Skill**.

Generally, **Skills** become stronger but more expensive as you and your **Agent** progress through the subset. Matches often conclude prior to ‘completing’ or ‘maxing out’ one or more subsets; choose your investments carefully!



It is possible to draw **Elements** beyond the minimum value but they will only replenish once **deployment** crosses below the minimum threshold.

**BRAIN**'s *Temporary Effect* and certain **Skills** that **draw** additional **Elements** will override the minimum!



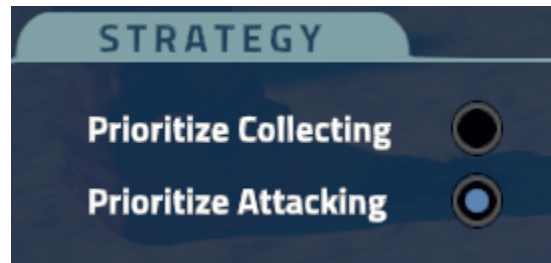
## Your Turn

Remember to prioritize your **Agent's** focus! They'll use this direction to guide them through the **Battle Phase**.

GAMEPLAY



Your **Agent** will harvest **Shards**, usually targeting via proximity. Your **Agent** might 'defend' a **Shard** if within range to **Collect** but waiting for the cooldown timer to expire, launching an **Attack** at an enemy **Agent** within range!



Your **Agent** will **Attack** enemy **Agents** within range, usually targeting via proximity. Your **Agent** might **Collect** a **Shard** within range while waiting for **Attack** cooldown timers to expire!



GAMEPLAY





## Your Turn



Maybe the most important directive to give your **Agent** is, for lack of a better term, a pain threshold. **Agents** will remain pursuant to their objectives until their HP drops below the amount you designate via **Slider** on the **Health Bar**, triggering retreat. While 'On **Survive**' your **Agent** will (temporarily) gain 2 **Armor**, recover HP and try to avoid all enemy **Agents**. Your **Agent** returns to **Attacking/Collecting** once HP recovers at or above the **Slider**. You are only able to set the **Slider** during the **Power Up Phase** and cannot modify it during the **Battle Phase**. Selecting "Always **Attack**" or "Always **Collect**" (setting the **Slider** at 0%) will prevent your **Agent** from retreating; they will continue to pursue their objective until the next **turn** or until their HP reaches 0. Selecting "Always **Survive**" will ensure that your **Agent** remains in retreat until the next **turn** or until their HP reaches 0; they will not **Attack** other **Agents** and they will not **Collect** any **Shards**.



While each **Agent** is *globally unique* and nonidentical to any other **Agent**, they all share and begin each match with the exact same base stats! These stats can be upgraded within a match through **Skill** purchases and other effects. Your opponents' **Power Up Phase** activity and their **Agents'** respective buffs will be revealed in the ensuing **Battle Phase**, adding a layer of intrigue and difficulty to each turn!



**Turns** progress in this cycle until a single **Agent** remains standing or until the **round** limit is reached. All **Agents** revert to their original base stats and **Skill** purchases are erased following each match.

## Parting Pointers



The glyphs besides your **Action** counter represent **Impulse**, which can be gained through **Skills** or effects (notably in the **BRAIN** and **TIME** subsets). Reaching 4 **Impulse** grants you an additional **Action** that **phase**!

Deploying **TIME** would result in:

- consumption of 1 **Action**
- an investment of 1
- unlocking the **Skill** “**Dimension Shift**” for purchase
- **drawing** 1 **Element** (if below minimum)
- gaining 2 **Impulse** (the *Temporary Effect* of a **TIME** deployment)
- gaining 1 **Action** (from accumulating 4 **Impulse**)

So, yes, that’s effectively a ‘free’ **Deploy**, since you’ll consume 1 but then gain 1 **Action**! Similarly to **drawing** above the minimum amount of **Elements**, it is also possible to achieve and perform more than 3 **Actions** in a **turn**.



It’s awfully tempting to throw hands immediately, but **Round 1 KO**s are quite rare. Keep in mind that enemy **Agents** can retreat, forcing your **Agent** into pursuit. Without a well-timed Critical Strike or, at least, a decent **Speed** advantage, this dance might continue over multiple rounds. **Agents** ‘**On Survive**’ may take a path towards other **Agents**, hoping to ‘pass off’ pursuers into others’ **Attack** ranges, potentially leaving your **Agent** vulnerable. Wise **Brokers** know when to pull off from an unfruitful chase. Setting your **Slider** above your current HP amount will guide your **Agent** to drop pursuit and change course. In the most dangerous situations, setting your **Slider** to 100% (aka ‘**Always Survive**’) can be the correct play – even if your HP is full!



A minimap helps monitor the field, especially during **Battle Phases**. An ‘M’ keystroke will display a full Map and, in either, hovering your cursor over an **Agent** icon will provide key details specific to that **Agent**! Review your hotkeys with an ‘H’ keystroke.

Thank you for taking the time to review this primer and let Chaos Reign!



## Post-Credits



*Take me on a tour of the **Altareth River Valley**. Let us behold **The Arena**, frolic in **The Meadowlands** and meditate at **The Hermitage**. Then, if you are not yet weary of my company, perhaps we can share a plate of eggs, together, in the Diner at the Edge of the **Firmament**.*

