

Ex Libris

(Solo game not covered here)

Set-Up:

1. Lay out the board and put the score board (dry erase) nearby (side B-7c – top right corner.)
2. Find the Location tile “Diviner’s Hut” and place it below the board. Shuffle the rest of the 17 Location tiles face-down.
3. Choose a Start player randomly and give them the White bead (1st player marker.)
4. Everyone takes 1 Library Tile. (Pick 1, or give 1 out randomly, or lay out 2 for each player collectively in the middle of the table and choose 1 in reverse order.)
5. Based on the Library Tile you got, take the matching “Special Assistant” and 2 “standard assistants.” For an easier game, all players replace their special assistant for a standard one, and flip their Library over to the generic side (blah!)
6. Shuffle the 6 category cards (yellow, red, blue, black, purple and green). Place 1 face-up next to the “Prominent Works” space and 1 next to the “Banned Books” space. Deal all players 1 card as well (you can look at it.) Extras go back to box.
7. Shuffle the 152 Book cards face-down. Deal 6 to each player for their starting hand. Keep this deck nearby.
8. See page 19 of the rulebook for slight variants to the game and solo mode rules.

Game Flow:

- Ex Libris is a worker placement game that is played in rounds until, at the end of a round, at least 1 player has 16/14/12 book cards in their library with 2/3/4 players. When this happens, play 1 more round and then go to final scoring.
- **The Phases of a Round are – Preparation, Placement, Resolution and Clean-up.** See below for details on each.
- For a longer (or shorter game,) you can adjust the amount of cards needed to trigger the end of the game.

Basic Concepts – Cards/Library Grid:

- During the game, players build their own library by playing cards to the table (adjacent to other cards in a grid fashion.)
- Each row can be as long as they want (wide,) but your library can only ever be 3 cards high! Essentially you can only have a max of 3 rows. The only rule regarding placement is that (other than the 1st card played obviously) you must “shelve” cards into your library rows so that they are orthogonally adjacent to another card.
- Speaking of cards, **all cards have 3 parts – Alphabet Order Chart, Book Category Symbols and “Flavor Art” of books.** (Mechanically, to play Ex Libris you only need to look at the Alphabet Order Chart and the Category Symbols.)
 - Alphabet Order – The letter shows what letter all books on this card start with and the X/Y means that X is the sequence this card falls in place out of Y cards for this particular letter of the Alphabet. (Example – “S” 3/10 means there are 10 “S” cards, and when putting these 10 in Alphabetical order, this particular card is 3rd in line.)
 - Book Category Symbols – The Color/Symbol just tell you what category of book it belongs to. This matters because some books are banned while others will earn you extra points at the end of the game. (see Set-Up)
 - “Flavor Art” of the Books – Funny titles, nothing more. Functionally you don’t even have to look at them to play.
- You want your library shelves to be in **Alphabetical order from Left to Right, Top to Bottom.** At the end of the game, any card that isn’t in sequence is flipped over and the books on it aren’t factored into scoring! (See “End Game” below.)
- Since you can lay cards adjacent to each other, you can always start in the middle and build up, down and sideways, or start at the bottom and work up or start high and work downward. Up to you! You can even place a card KNOWING it is out of order, but do your best to keep cards in sequential order for higher scores. (See pg 4 in rulebook.)

Ways to Score Points:

- FYI, the B1-B5 mentioned below corresponds with the sections on the main board for end game scoring.
- There are 6 categories of books in the game (Blue, Black, Yellow, Red, Purple, Green.) Based on Set-Up, you know that 1 category is “Prominent” (1st/2nd/3rd most of this book will score 15/9/4 points at the end of the game – B2) and 1 category is “Banned” (-1 point for each of this book in your library at the end of the game – B3.)
- Also during Set-Up, each player was dealt a secret card that shows a category just like the Prominent/Banned cards. This category will score you 2 points for each book of that color you have in your library at the end of the game (B5).
- Shelf Stability (B1) – At the end of the game, you will look at your bottom row of cards, for every adjacent card going left to right and up and down that forms a “square/rectangle” of at least 2x2 (meaning 2 cards adjacent on the bottom row and 2 cards above them on the next row) will score you 1 point for each card in this “box” at the end of the game. (see pg 5 in the rulebook for good examples.) Only your largest “box” will be scored! Try making it 6x3 for 18 points!
- Lastly, you’ll want to make sure to focus on putting all 5 non-banned categories into your Library because at the end of the game you will multiply your lowest category number by 3 for points! (B4)

(over)

Game Round:

1. Preparation Phase

- Reveal location tiles from the pile equal to the number of players in the game. (During round 1, reveal 1 less location tile because the Diviner's Hut is already out.) If the stack of location tiles runs out, shuffle the discards.
- Check if any location tile has any "Preparation Instructions" in the upper right corner. See the Glossary below for details on each tile.
- Some location tiles require cards (from the deck) to be placed on them (face-up or face-down.) Make sure the Letter and Symbols at the top can be seen (if face-up.)

2. Placement Phase

- Starting with the 1st player (white bead), and going clockwise, each player places out 1 assistant at a time (standard or special) onto either an empty location space or an empty space on your own "Home" board.
- If you have no assistants left, you "pass" until everyone has finished placing all their assistants for the round.
- If a tile shows "3+," it means only used this space with 3 or more players. If showing "4+," only used with 4 or more players.
- If the location has a Green banner (Instant action,) do the action immediately after you place your assistant.
- If the location has a Red banner (Delayed,) leave your assistant on the location and it will be resolved in phase 3.
- If you place your assistant on your Home board, you make a choice, either draw 1 card or shelve 1 card (see tile.)
- See the "Location Glossary" and "Special Assistant Abilities" below for details on placement.
- If there is a timing conflict between **Location abilities** and **Special Assistant abilities**, use the follow order:
 1. The effect of a Location takes precedence over any Special Assistant ability.
 2. The ability of a previously placed Special Assistant triggers BEFORE the ability of the newly placed Special Assistant. (If conflicts arise between 2 Special assistants at a location, the one that has been there the longest takes priority and so on.)

3. Resolution Phase

- Because of the "Trash Golem's" ability, this phase is going to be worded a little strangely, but you'll speed up once you know what you are doing.
- When all players have no more assistants to place, in ascending tile order (1-18), resolve each location tile (in play) as followed:
 1. If the location has a "Delayed Ability" (red banner), resolve it as instructed on the tile (3, 11, 12), if it has an "instant ability," skip this step.
 2. If any cards remain at this location, discard them now to the discard pile. (Trash Golem triggers.)
 3. Return all assistants from this tile to it's owner. Move on to the next tile until all are resolved.
- As you play the game (especially if the Trash Golem is not in play,) you will figure out how to do this much faster, but the rules needed to be structured this way for certain circumstances.

4. Clean-up Phase

- Of the tiles that were newly draw this round, move the tile with the lowest number (upper left) onto the bottom portion of the main board where it says "Permanent Locations." It will remain in play for the rest of the game.
- The rest of the tiles NOT currently on the main board (that were used this last round) are discarded.

End Game:

- If a least 1 player has 16/14/12 book cards in their Library at the end of a round with 2/3/4 players, play 1 final round before the game ends.
- Use the dry erase board to score (see the top of the main board for the scoring sequence – A1, A2, B1, B2...)
 - First before anything else, players may voluntarily turn any cards they want in their library face-down!
 - **A1** – All players check to see that they have their cards in alphabetical order from left to right, top to bottom. Any card that isn't in Alphabetical order is flipped face-down immediately until the next card does follow A-Z.
 - **A2** – Tally the number of books each player has for all 6 categories (even the Prominent and Banned ones).
 - **B1** – Count the number of cards in your biggest "box." Score 1 point for each card. Remember, must be at least a 2x2 with the base row and flipped card DO count!
 - **B2** – Players with the 1st/2nd/3rd most "Prominent books" (see section A) will score 15/9/4 points. Tied places are added together and divided as evenly as possible (round up!)
 - **B3** – Each player loses 1 point for each Banned book they have.
 - **B4** – Of the 5 non-banned categories, each player's "lowest" number (section A) is multiplied by 3 for points.
 - **B5** – Each player reveals their secret category and multiplies that number (section A) by 2 for points.
- Most points is the winner. Ties broken by the player with the most BOOKS, then by fewest remaining cards in hand, then by fewest Banned books.

A - Analyze

B - Score

Location Glossary

1. **Diviner's Hut (Instant)** – Draw 1 card from the deck for each assistant (standard and special) you placed so far (including this one.) Take the 1st player marker. Note – The Ghost can't come here!
2. **Ye Old Book Swap (Instant)** – Trade 1 card from your hand with 1 card here. May shelve this new card.
3. **Auction House (Delayed)** – Placing an assistant here is making a bid (cards you will discard at the end of the round if you win.) You can choose any space but must outbid a player if they are present. If a player is outbid, they immediately take back their assistant. When the tile is evaluated at the end of the round, the player on the bid track discards cards equal to the bid number and takes all cards from here. All card takes can be shelved. If that player can't pay the cards, they pay nothing but take nothing!
4. **Donation Centre (Instant)** – Discard 1+ cards from your hand/library, then shelve up to 2 card from your hand.
5. **Community Centre (Instant)** – Take 1 card from here and give another to 1 opponent (both may be shelved.)
6. **Wishing Well (Instant)** – Discard "X" cards, then draw "X+1" cards from the deck (can shelve 1 card drawn.)
7. **Gambling Den (Instant)** – Starting with the active player and going clockwise, players with assistants here names a DIFFERENT category. Reveal 4 cards from the deck and the player whose category has the most books on the 4 revealed cards takes only the cards with those books on them (discard the others.) Other players get nothing. Winning player may shelve 1 of these cards earned. If ties – If active player involved, they win. If not, player closest to the active player in clockwise order wins.
8. **Librarian's Lodge (Instant)** – Do the following 2 steps in any order you wish.
 - a. Move 1 previously placed assistant from a "Location" to a space on your "Home" board and activate it.
 - b. Exchange 1 card from your Library with any card in your hand (swap out,) another card in your Library (switch) or to any legal position in your Library (simply move it).
9. **Book Collector (Instant)** – Discard any number of cards from your hand/Library. For every 2 books discarded that match a category on the Collector's card, draw 1 card from the deck. You can shelve up to 2 cards drawn.
10. **Book Seller (Instant)** – Take 1 card from here and you may shelve it immediately if you wish.
11. **Garbage Dump (Delayed)** – Name a category of book and go through the Discard pile (can't look through beforehand.) Take 1 card with the matching category. You may shelve this card. (No matching, no card.)
12. **Local Drafthouse (Delayed)** – The player whose assistant is on space 1 draws 2 cards for every assistant here, and lays them face-up on the table. Going in order from 1-4 (assistants on the tile,) each player take 1 of the cards until they are all gone. Any card taken from here can be shelved.
13. **Mystery Shack (Instant)** – Name 1 category of book, look at the cards face-down her, and take any card with that matching category on it. You can shelve 1 of these cards. Cards not taken go face-down on this location.
14. **Rummage Sale (Instant)** – Take 1 card from here. If there is another assistant here, take 2 cards from here. Any cards taken from here can be shelved.
15. **Assistant's Guild (Instant)** – Move 1 of your assistants from your Home Board (action space) to any Location Board Action Space occupied by an opponent's assistant (previously placed.) Return that player's assistant so that they may place it again this round. If this space has an instant effect, do it now.
16. **Tax Collector (Instant)** – In turn order, all OPPONENTS must discard 1 card from their hand/library face-up to this space, then you can discard any number of cards from your hand/library to take the same number from the Tax Collector's area. Shelve any card you just took.
17. **Yard Sale (Instant)** – Reveal any number of cards from your hand to your opponents. In turn order, they may take/shelve 1 of your revealed cards or pass. Repeat this until all cards you revealed are gone or they all pass. For each card that was taken from you, draw 2 cards from the deck, then shelve any 1 card in your hand.
18. **Shelfmason's Guild (Instant)** – Shift any number of adjacent cards in the same row (of your Library) any number of spaces in 1 direction. You can't split your library into 2+ groups.

Special Assistant Abilities

- **Automaton** – When the Automaton is placed on a tile, before activating him, you may take 1 “home” action for every other assistant of yours (friendly) present on this tile.
- **Bookworm** – When the Bookworm performs a “Home” action, you may perform BOTH “Home” actions. After, you may discard 1 card from your hand or library to repeat this double home action again.
- **Fire Imp** – When the Fire Imp visits a location with 1+ cards at it, prior to activation, you may discard 1 card from the location to perform 1 “home” action or all cards to perform 2 “home” actions (could be the same one twice.)
- **Gelatinous Cube** – If an opposing assistant visits the same location as the Gelatinous Cube, prior to any activation or abilities, the opposing player must give you 1 card from their hand or allow you to perform BOTH “home” actions.
- **Ghost** – The Ghost can’t visit the Diviner’s Hut. The Ghost can share a space with an opponent’s assistant on an “instant” location tile (not delayed.) Prior to activating any effects or abilities, draw 1 card from the deck.
- **Goblin Sneak** – When the Goblin Sneak visits a location tile with 1+ opponent, prior to activating any effects, try to “pickpocket.” Choose an opponent at the location and name 1 category. That opponent **MUST** give you a card with this book (if they have one) or it or show you their hand containing none. Repeat this for each opponent at this location. Any card acquired can be shelved.
- **Mummy** – When the Mummy shelves a card, this card can be “entombed” on top of or underneath any card in their library. Cards under other cards are turned face-down. Only 1 card can be under another card. “Entombed” cards at the end of the game are worth 2 points each. (If the top card is ever removed, the card underneath remains face-down but is no longer considered “entombed.”)
- **Sasquatch** – Sasquatch can only visit locations where no opposing assistants are. If an opponent visits a location with Sasquatch, prior to any activation, Sasquatch may be removed from that location to be used again this round.
- **Snowman** – If the Snowman is at an “instant” location (not delayed,) no other assistants may visit this location.
- **Trash Golem** – When cards are discarded off a location during the Resolution Phase, the Trash Golem can take 1 card. He continues this process until he himself is returned to his owner when his tile is resolved. Any cards taken this way can be shelved.
- **Witch** – Anytime the Witch acquires a card with a “banned” book on it, she can reveal the top card of the deck and take that card instead. Whichever card she doesn’t keep, it is discarded.
- **Wizard** – When the Wizard shelves a card, he can shift a group of any number of adjacent cards 1 space in any direction, creating an empty space for this newly shelved card. Your library must follow library rules once this new card is placed.