



0. Presentation

You are a producer in a pop-idol production company. Your job is to create a good company, to tempt new idols to come your way, and create an ultimate idol unit; your final goal being a concert in the Dome.

But it's not that easy. All new idols have preferences on what company to be a part of, and if you don't fulfill their requirements, they'll run to your rivals! So you have to use your money wisely to employ good staff, buy good equipment and also, simply be a known production company that they want to be a part of.

And once you have the contracts, you still need to find work for them, or your company simply won't make it financially.

The game goes on until one player has succeeded to get a concert in the Dome. At that point, the player with the most victory points is the winner.

1. Components

This game consists of the following components:

- **114 Game cards distributed as follows:**
- 25 Idol cards
- 6 Event cards
- 16 Studio cards
- 16 Staff cards
- 16 Fame cards
- 25 Work cards
- 5 order cards
- 5 reference cards
- **24 stocks**
- **85 paper money bills distributed as follows:**
- 20 "10 AG"
- 15 "50 AG"
- 35 "100 AG"
- 15 "500 AG"
- **1 Money stand**
- **Instruction booklet (this)**

Idol Project

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2. The cards

• 2-1 Idol cards

The Idol cards are the core of the game. Each card displays 1 pop idol.



1. **Name** The name of the idol.
2. **VP** Victory Points.
3. **Upkeep** The amount of money the player must pay each round to keep her in the company.
4. **Preferences.** The idol will run to the company that has the highest value in her preferences. The 2nd preference is in the case of a tie for the 1st.
5. **Idol skills.** How well the idol performs as an idol. There are 4 types of idol skills, each represented by an icon:



Singing Looks Dancing Acting

6. **Special effect.** The effect the idol has on the company. Some idols positively or negatively affects the company just by belonging to it. For example, Hikari Kagawa lowers the Fame of the company by 1.

7. **Flavour text.** Doesn't influence the game.



• 2-2 Event cards

Events are happening or accidents that the players have to cope with. They're mixed together with the Idol cards.

1. **Name.** The name of the event.
2. **Effect.** Whatever happens when this event is drawn. If an event is drawn at the start of a turn, it's resolved immediately.



• 2-3 Work cards

The work the idols can do.

1. **Name.** The name of the work.
2. **VP.** How many Victory points this work is worth.
3. **Gage.** How much the company is paid for the work.
4. **Required skill.** How much total skill your idol(s) must have in order to perform this work. If you have several idols in your company, you can let them do the work together and add up their total skill.



• **2-4 Dome concert cards**
Dome concert cards are a specific kind of work cards. They're not mixed in with the other work cards; instead they're dealt one to each player at the start of the game. The requirements of the five dome concert cards vary. When any player manages to perform the dome concert, the game ends and victory points are calculated.

Some dome concert cards have a specific icon without the white background on the skill requirements area. *These should only be taken into account in a 3 player game*, i.e. in a 3 player game, it's slightly more difficult to perform the dome concert.

Each dome concert card also has a specific *starting bonus*, stated at the bottom left of the card. When the dome concert cards are dealt at the start of the game, each player will also receive this bonus.



• **2-5 Studio cards**
These represent how much studio equipment your company has.
1. Name. "Equipment" or "Deluxe equipment".
2. Cost. How much money it costs to buy.
3. Increment. How much your company's Studio value increases with this card.



• **2-6 Staff cards**
These represent how much staff your company has.
1. Name. "Staff member" or "Superior staff member".
2. Cost. How much money it costs to employ this guy.
3. Increment. How much your company's Staff value increases with this card.



• **2-7 Fame cards**
These represent how famous your company is as an idol production.
1. Name. "Magazine ad" or "TV commercial".
2. Cost. How much money this ad/commercial costs.
3. Increment. How much your company's Fame value increases with this card.



• **2-8 Stock cards**
These give a small income each round. You can own as many as you wish, but you may only buy one per round. When you sell your stocks, you have to sell all stocks you have.

• **2-9 Turn order cards**

The player order is auction out at the beginning of each turn. These cards are used to keep track of the turn order.

• **2-10 Reference cards**

One side of these cards is a quick reference of the different phases in each turn. The other side is a safe; players are supposed to keep their money hidden beneath this card throughout the game.

3. Preparations – Game setup

Setting up the game consists of placing all the different cards in stacks in the middle of the table so that all can reach them. Each player should have enough room before him to keep a fair amount of cards, as his company will gain more and more cards during the game and these will have to be visible at all times. The area in which a player keeps his cards and money is called is "office".

• **Set up the idol card stack**

Shuffle all the Idol cards and Event cards into one deck and place it face down. This is the "idol deck". Reveal the top card; if this is an Event card, then return it to the deck and reshuffle. Repeat until the revealed card is an Idol card. Place the revealed card on top of the deck.

• **Studio, Staff and Fame deck**

Shuffle the Studio, Staff and Fame cards *separately*, and place them face down beside each other. These are the studio deck, staff deck and fame deck respectively.

• **Set up the Work card stack**

Shuffle all the work cards except the Dome concert cards and place in a face-down pile. This is the "work deck".

• **Stock cards, paper money, turn order cards.**

Keep the stock cards in a pile for themselves, sort the paper money according to value, and let the turn order cards lie easily accessible. Naturally, you're only using as many turn order cards as there are players in the game.

• **Deal the starting set to each player**

Each player receives 1000 AG, and a reference card (to hide the money beneath). Money in this game is a hidden trackable.

Then shuffle the **Dome concert cards** and deal one to each player. For less than 5 players, cards number 53 is not used and in a 3-player game, there will be one surplus Dome concert card. Put them back in the box.

Each Dome concert card (except no 53) has a starting bonus stated at the bottom left; an "Equipment", "Staff member" or "Magazine ad" card or 500 AG. See to that each player gets his starting bonus.

4. Flow of the game

The game consists of a number of "rounds" that are repeated until the game ends. Each round consists of 8 phases, that are resolved in order. For details, please refer to the "phase details" later in the rules.

1) Round preparation

New Studio, Staff and Fame cards are drawn. New work cards are drawn. Idol deck is resolved.

2) Income

Each player gets 300 AG plus any extra from their stocks.

3) Selling stocks

Players decide if they want to sell their stocks or not.

4) Turn order auction

The turn order for the next phase is auctioned out.

5) Activity

In card order, players do their activity: Buying a stock card or not, and then do 1 activity action.

6) Idol employ

The current idol runs to her favourite company.

7) Upkeep

All players pay the upkeep for their idol(s).

8) Transfer

In card order, players may kick or transfer their idol(s).

5. Game end and victory

If any one player manages to do the Dome concert during the Activity phase, the game ends immediately. The game also ends if the Studio, Staff, Fame or Work decks are depleted.

When the game ends, each player calculates how many VP (Victory Points) he has. The player with the most VP wins. In case of a tie, the player with the most idols wins. If it's still a tie, money is the tiebreaker.

6. Phase details

6-1 Round preparation

Preparing the central area for the round.

• Studio, Staff and Fame deck

Turn over the top card in each deck and place it beside its draw pile. These are the cards available this round. If there are cards left from the previous round, first place them face down at the bottom of their draw pile.

• Work deck

Draw the top 3 Work cards and line them up beside the draw pile. These are the works available this turn. If there were work cards left from the previous round, first put them back randomly face down at the bottom of the Work pile.

• Stock cards

Place out as many stock cards as there are players minus one. (3 if there are 4 players etc) If there were stock cards left from the previous round, first put them back in the pile.

• Idol deck

Take the top, face up idol card and place it beside the stack. This is the round's current idol, that will be employed during this round's employ phase. Then turn over the top card of the idol deck and place it on the deck. This is the "upcoming" idol that will enter the game the next round. If the revealed card is an event card, immediately resolve the event, then put it into the game box (it's out of the game) and reveal the next card from the idol deck. Repeat until you reveal an idol. Put the idol, face up, on top of the idol deck so that all can see and perhaps this round prepare for the next.

6-2 Income

Each player receives 300 AG plus 20 AG per Stock card they have in their possession, from the bank. Bank money is considered an unlimited supply.

6-3 Selling stocks

As no one owns stocks the first round, this phase is skipped.

In card order, players decide whether or not to sell their stocks. A player who decides to sell must sell all his stock cards; he can't just sell some of them. The more stock cards a player has, the more he gets per card, see chart below. The sold stock cards are returned to the central area.

Selling 1 stock:	200 AG
Selling 2-3 stocks:	250 AG per card
Selling 4-5 stocks:	300 AG per card
Selling 6 or more:	350 AG per card

6-4 Turn order auction

Turn order cards are now collected, and the turn order for the next phase will be auctioned out. This auction is a crucial part of the game.

The player who was first the previous round starts the bidding. For the first round, do a rock-paper-scissors to decide who bids first.

The first bid must be at least 10 AG. In clockwise order around the table, players may then either raise the bid by at least 10 AG or pass. To raise, the player must of course have enough money. This goes on until all but one player has passed.

A player who passes takes the round card with the highest number of those cards not already taken. He pays no money, even if he had done a bid before he passed. *Players who get card number 4 or 5 gets a consolation bonus of 50 AG from the bank.*

The last player left pays the current bid to the bank and gets the remaining card number 1. The money he pays represents how much money the company spent on being everywhere at the same time and getting in first at important moments. He will be first during the activity phase, *and he also gets to do 2 company activities.*

6-5 Activity

In card order, players choose their activity. The first player will have many options, whereas the last player usually has none.

• Buy a Stock card or not

First, the player may buy a Stock card if there are any left. There is no limit as to how many Stock cards a player may own, but a player may only buy 1 Stock card per round. As the number of available Stock cards each round is one less than the number of players, it often happens that there are no Stock cards left for the last player. It may also happen that the game runs out of Stock cards (it's an intentional limited supply).

• Company activity

After any Stock buying, the player may take 1 of the following 4 actions:

- 1) Invest in Studio, Staff or Fame
- 2) Prevent investments
- 3) Send idols to work
- 4) Earn cash (not available for first player)

1) Invest in Studio, Staff or Fame

The player may buy one of the three investments and add to his company. The required money is paid to the bank. There is no limit as to how many cards of each type a player may have. No new card is drawn at this point to replace the bought card(s), which means that the third, fourth and fifth player usually cannot invest in anything.

2) Prevent investments

If the player doesn't have money enough to invest, but wants to prevent the other players from investing, he may simply put one of the investment cards back in its pile, face down at the bottom.

3) Send idols to work

If the player has one or more idols whose skill total is equal to or larger than the requirements of any of the face up Work cards, he may gain the corresponding Work card (place it in his office). The Work card earns the player some VPs and also some (small amount of) cash from the bank.

If the player has enough idols to perform the Dome concert, this is the timing in which he does so. If that happens, the game ends immediately and VP is calculated.

4) Earn cash

If you are short of money or have no other options, you can always choose to do some standard studio work and earn some cash. This will net you 200 AG. However, the player with card number 1 may not do this activity; he's expected to do better than this.

First player activity bonus

As mentioned before, the first player may, after having bought one stock or not, take *two* of company activities 1-3. He's not allowed to take activity 4 (earning cash), but he may take the same activity twice, except sending idols to work, which may only be done once.

6-6 Idol employ

During which the current idol is employed.

1) Reveal the masked idol's identity

If any player has the "masked idol", that player may now choose to reveal her identity (or not). If he does reveal her identity, he simply takes either any of the idols in another player's office, or the current round's idol, or the idol on top of the idol deck (next round's idol). The masked idol is returned to the game box.

If the player chose the idol on top of the idol deck, draw a new card to replace it (if it's an event, resolve it immediately and draw a new idol). If he chose the current round's idol, the phase ends without going to 2).

2) Determine current idol's company

Check the current idol's 1st preference. All players add up their amount in the given preference. If any one player has a higher amount than everyone else, then he gets the idol. If there's a tie, check for the idol's 2nd preference. The idol goes to the one among those who tied for the 1st and who has highest in the 2nd. If it's a tie for the 2nd preference too, the idol gets disillusioned of the idol world and runs off to become a shrine maiden (put her back at the bottom of the idol deck).

6-7 Upkeep

All players now have to pay to the bank the necessary amount of money to keep their idols. Players must pay up if they can. Players can not sell stocks at this time.

If a player doesn't have enough money to pay for all his idols, he first of all pays as much as he can (all his money). Then he checks how many idols he failed to pay for, shuffles his idols, fans them out face down and lets the player to his left draw as many as he couldn't pay for. He loses these idols, and they're returned to the bottom of the idol deck.

6-8 Transfer

In card order, players may now choose to either fire one or several of his idols, or offer them to other players. To fire an idol, the player has to pay the upkeep fee again, to the bank, and then return the idol to the bottom of the idol deck. If another player wants the idol instead, the player can let her transfer. The receiving player has to pay the upkeep fee to the current player as a transfer fee. If several players offer to take the idol, the current player may choose freely who to transfer her to. If no one wants the idol, she can't be transferred, but she can be fired (if the player can afford to).

7. Hints and optional rules

The turn order auction is an important part, but don't get too carried away – staying behind and saving your money is an important tactic. Being second in turn order is usually the most economical – try to read your opponents to be the last to pass.

In the base game, the Dome concert VP is geared so that the player who completes the concert is next to bound to win. For a closer game, try lowering the Dome concert VP to 10, or even 8!

8. Playing the game in English

The vast majority of the cards in Idol Project are symbol-based, with the card title only in Japanese. The six event cards have Japanese text needed for the game, and a few idols have a special effect. However, the idols' three preference categories are easily remembered, and moreover all these cards are public information. Thus the game can be played without any paste-ups of the cards, and with only a crib sheet for reference. For an easy reference to the six event cards, and for the names and effects for all idols, please refer to the separate "Card text reference sheet".

Any questions about the game or its rules can be sent to the following e-mail address. We apologize for being unable to handle game questions via mail or telephone.

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