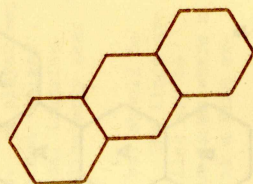


The

GAME OF ANCIENT

KINGDOMS



A GAME OF
SKILL
FOR 2 TO 5
PLAYERS



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'KINGDOMS' is a game of position and movement which was inspired by the migrations of ancient peoples as they sought permanent boundaries to their territories.

This is a game of nation building. Players do not seek to eliminate each other but compete to establish a unified country around their 'King'. The presence of the monarch has a stabilising influence on the area he controls; this may, however, be too small for his people in which case the 'warrior' becomes a powerful means of extending the King's domains.

While such allusions to historic times are valid - as is reflected in the design of the playing tiles - 'Kingdoms' is primarily an abstract game. The basic rules are simple but they lead to a variety of tactical situations which a skilled player will recognise and be able to develop with considerable style.

The character of the game also varies considerably according to how many play. Precise contests giving ample scope for careful planning and cunning sacrifices are usual with two people. Extra players make the game less predictable and can lead to 'sudden death' endings due to failure to take due note of the progress of an unobtrusive player! Such games are often more light-hearted and are suitable for a wide range of ages.

SUMMARY

Players take turns to lay their tiles on the playing surface. Once they have all been placed the next phase begins in which the players exchange the position

of two tiles per turn in an attempt to unite all of their tiles into a single group. The first person to succeed in doing this is the winner.

All the tiles may be used in the same way but there are restrictions on exchanging a tile from a group that contains an opposing king. Also, the Warrior is able to make certain moves not open to the other pieces.

THE PIECES

Each player has a set of 18 tiles, 16 of them plain



plus a KING (shown full face) and a WARRIOR (shown side face). A group of tiles of the same colour including a King is called a KINGDOM. Any other such group is called a COUNTRY. To be classed as a group all tiles must be in contact.

During the first or POSITIONING PHASE of the game a beginner is advised to lay his King in a fairly central position but his Warrior will be more use at the edge.

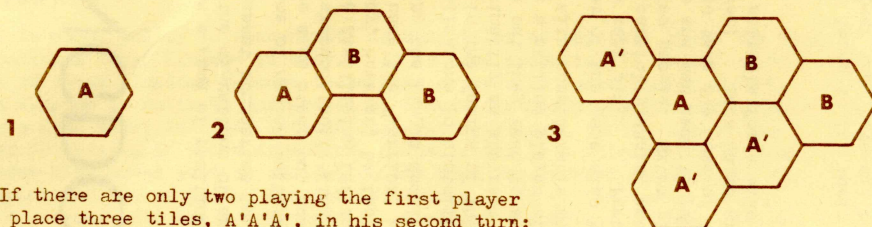
PLAY THE POSITIONING PHASE

Use a level playing surface about 2½ ft square. It is helpful to play on a soft cloth, making it easier to pick up tiles during the MOVEMENT PHASE when they often have to be removed from a surrounded position.

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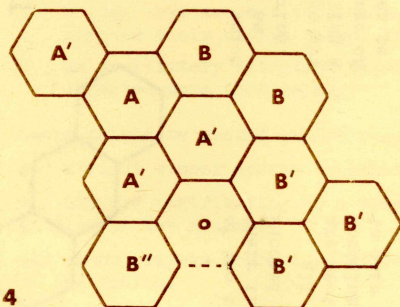
Each player takes a set of tiles in a distinctive colour. One player is chosen to start and the game continues in clockwise rotation.

The first player then lays one of his tiles, A, near the centre of the playing area. The second person places two of his tiles, B B, so that all three are in contact; the next player then places three of his tiles, again in contact with the tiles already laid, the next person to play places four and so on.



If there are only two playing the first player will place three tiles, A'A'A', in his second turn; then player B lays four etc. Irrespective of how many people are playing each player always lays one more tile than was laid in the previous turn - until this is no longer possible due to shortage of tiles, then all the remaining tiles are laid. Players are advised to count out their tiles before beginning their turns to avoid the risk of laying the wrong number.

Remember that all tiles must be in contact with each other, 'holes' are allowed and often arise but 'islands' are not.



RULE 1

DURING THE POSITIONING PHASE NO COUNTRY OR KINGDOM MAY CONTAIN MORE THAN FIVE TILES

In figure 4 the tiles B' were laid by player B in his second turn. He can not then lay his fourth tile at O because this would make him a country of six tiles so he starts another country at B".

Once players have laid all their tiles the game enters the Movement Phase.

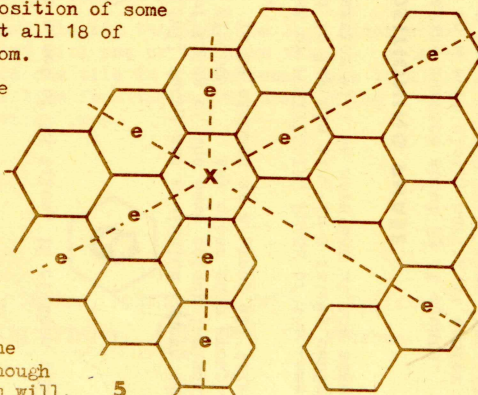
THE MOVEMENT PHASE

Players now have to exchange the position of some of the tiles as they attempt to collect all 18 of their own into a single group or Kingdom.

Each turn a player can exchange the position of a pair of tiles, which may be any distance apart, provided that they are in line. There are 6 directions in which a tile may take part in an exchange, referred to as LINES OF MOVEMENT.

In figure 5, tile X may be exchanged with any of those marked e.

Note that it is not even necessary for either of the tiles in an exchange to belong to the player moving them although usually one of them will.



It will be appreciated that, in addition to uniting his own tiles, it is frequently desirable for a player to try to break up the territory of a powerful rival, particularly if he seems on the verge of winning! The Kings serve to restrict the scope of such disruptive tactics.

KING

RULE 2 NO PLAYER MAY REMOVE (i.e. EXCHANGE) TILES FROM ANOTHER'S KINGDOM EXCEPT IN AN EXCHANGE WITH HIS OWN KING

Consequently, once a player has managed to group most of his tiles in a compact pattern around his King he is in a strong position because this formation can only be attacked by another King. In practice such attacks are not usually decisive except when the Kingdom is narrow and can be split in two by the exchange of just one tile. An exchange between two Kings is a far more momentous affair because the erstwhile Kingdom, once deprived of its monarch, will be quickly hacked to bits by rival players. Hence, the King is primarily a defensive piece but, should he go over to the attack, he is a very powerful piece indeed.

There is, though, a special limitation on the movement of Kings.

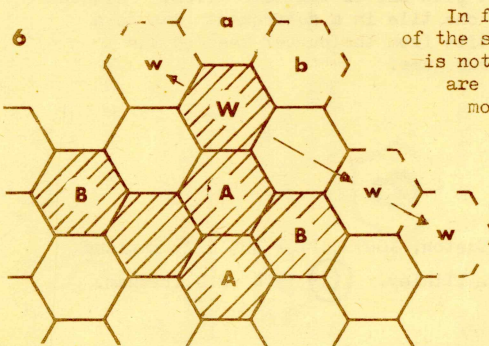
RULE 3 EACH PLAYER MAY MOVE HIS KING ONCE WITHOUT PENALTY. EVERY TIME HE MOVES HIS KING AGAIN ALL OTHER PLAYERS MAY REMOVE ONE OF THEIR TILES FROM THE GAME

The other players must remove their tiles at once or not at all; the whole operation being part of the turn of the player who removed his King. A player may choose to remove any tile of his providing it does not cause a detached 'island'. Obviously, he should choose one which is awkwardly placed for eventual transfer into his Kingdom so the benefit gained can be very significant, particularly near the end of a game.

It will be realised that King moves should not be made lightly but should be conserved for those occasions when they will have the most effect. The Kings are the only pieces in the game whose moves are restricted, all other tiles may be moved freely any number of times. Note that Rule 3 only applies to cases where a player moves his own King; if it is moved by someone else, as part of a King exchange, this does not count against him.

WARRIOR

The Warrior can be used as an ordinary tile but he may also be moved to any vacant position on his Lines of Movement. Alternatively, a player may move one of his other tiles, along a Line of Movement, to a vacant position adjacent to his Warrior



In figure 6, the Warrior, W, can move to any of the spaces marked w. If, though, the Warrior is not moved then either of the tiles A, which are the same colour as the Warrior, could be moved to position a; or the tiles B to the position b etc. In his turn, a player may make one move of this sort in lieu of an exchange move.

Such moves are the only ones permitted which are not exchanges and so are the only ones which cause the outline of the tile mosaic to alter during the Movement Phase (apart from the special case des-

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cribed in Rule 3 where tiles are removed entirely from the game).

It is not permitted to make moves which result in tiles ending up as detached units.

TACTICS

It is sound policy to concentrate as many tiles as possible round the King thus making a large Kingdom quickly. It is also essential to beware of the growth of other Kingdoms because these have a powerful constraining effect. Once a Kingdom is entirely surrounded by others further expansion must involve either a King move, to break into an opponent's Kingdom, or the use of the Warrior to develop in a new direction. The latter is a fairly slow process and undue King moves must be avoided so the need for careful planning to maintain space for the completed Kingdom is obvious. In extreme cases it may even be necessary to use a King move to establish a completely fresh Kingdom.

SCORING

Normally, each game will produce an outright winner but a DRAW will result if:

- 1 In completing his own Kingdom a player also completes someone else's
- 2 A King move subject to penalty is made and, once other players have removed their chosen tiles, two or more complete Kingdoms are formed
- 3 An oscillatory situation arises in which move and counter move are repeated more than twice.

Games should be scored as follows:

An outright winner scores 20 points.

All players contributing to a draw score as many points as they have tiles in play at the finish.

All other players score 1 point for each tile forming part of their Kingdom at the finish.

HANDICAPPING

The game can be made easier to play if the number of tiles per player is reduced. Young children may prefer to play with only 12 tiles each and no Warriors; this leads to a quick and straight forward game.

When people of different abilities are playing together the less experienced or younger members can be allowed to start with one or two less tiles. Alternatively, start with 16 tiles each and add one tile in a subsequent game to a player who has just won and take off one tile from the number used by the player with the lowest score in the previous game.

HARTLAND Trefoil Ltd. 96 Main Road, Duston, NORTHAMPTON NN5 6RA, England

Designed by F.G.Tresham and G.E.N.Tinley. © 1976 F.G.Tresham.