

The Historical Piecepacker

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Part I

Making Various Boards

Chapter 1

Making Traditional Board Game Accessories

1.1 Cribbage

Players 2

Length 10-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack and one deck of playing cards

Designer Traditional (Sir John Suckling), adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 2.0

Version Date 2019-05-16

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1.1.1 Description

Cribbage is a popular two-person card game that usually requires a special cribbage board to keep score. Below is a way to turn a piecepack into an effective cribbage board.

1.1.2 Setup

Depending on the version of cribbage played a player usually wins if they score 61 points or 121 points (on a traditional cribbage board the latter effect is achieved by going twice around a 60 hole crib board).

Give each player 12 tiles and arrange them in one vertical column in groups of two as in Figure 1.1. If you look at the “points” of this board and ignore the middle column of points then this gives you two columns each with 30 “points” arranged in groups of 5 as in a traditional cribbage board. Each player can place up to 12 coins in the middle column as a reminder to not use it. Give each player two pawns that they will use as “pegs”. They will start off the board before entering the beginning of the board and a player wins when one peg goes off the end of the board. For a 121 point game the player must make a circuit of the board twice. Use piecepack dice as counters to keep track of how many games each player has won.

1.1.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/2398/cribbage>

Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cribbage>

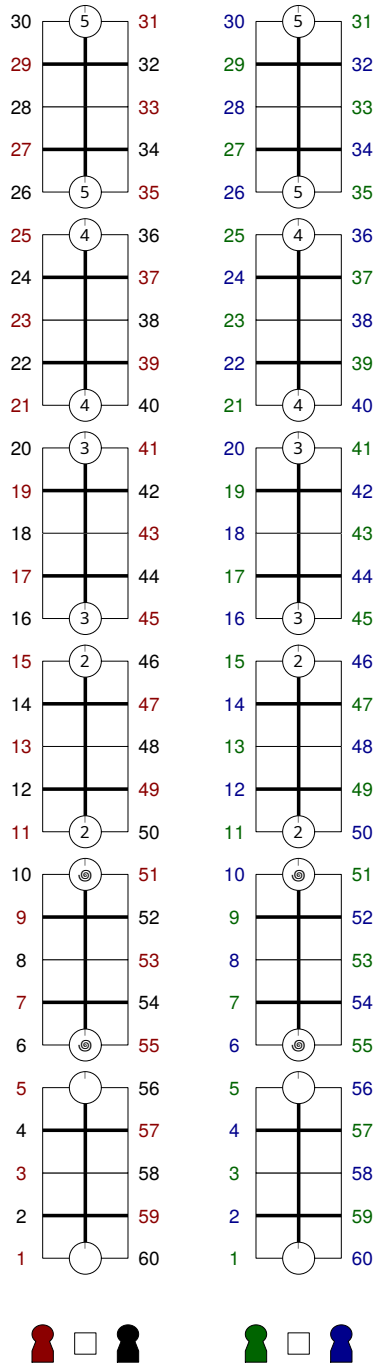


Figure 1.1: Cribbage starting diagram

Part II
Game Rules

Chapter 2

Traditional Board Games

2.1 Four Field Kono

Players 2

Length 15 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Michael Schoessow

Author Michael Schoessow and Trevor L Davis

Version 1.1

Version Date 2019-05-18

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2.1.1 Description

Four-Field Kono is a traditional Korean 2-player game.

2.1.2 Setup

Four-Field Kono is played on a 4 by 4 board made with four tile backs. Have each player sit across from each other and give each player eight of the coin backs of two suits (i.e. “astronomical” versus “power” suits or “dark” versus “light” suits) which they each use to populate the half of the board closest to them so that all squares are occupied at the beginning of the game. Figure 2.1 shows the recommended setup.

2.1.3 Rules

A player wins by capturing seven of the other player’s coins or by depriving the other player of a move. One player goes first,¹ after which players alternate turns, moving one of their pieces each turn. All movements are orthogonal. Captures are made by jumping over a friendly piece to land on and capture an enemy piece just beyond. Non-capturing moves consist of moving one space onto an empty square.

2.1.4 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/20560/four-field-kono>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/game/205/four-field-kono>

Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Field_Kono

¹Such as the player owning coins of the highest suit.

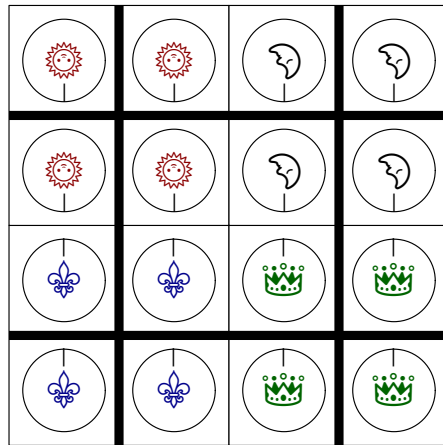


Figure 2.1: Four Field Kono starting diagram

Part III

Game Hints

Chapter 3

Chess Variants

The large variety of boards that can be created with piecepack tiles and the large number of differentiable pieces makes a piecepack a good tool to play a wide variety of chess variants. One can reduce the difficulty in remembering which piecepack piece corresponds to which chess (variant) piece if you mentally link the six piecepack ranks to the six FIDE chess ranks and if necessary you mentally link the six FIDE chess ranks to their counterparts in other chess variants. See Table 3.1 for the natural links between piecepack ranks and chess ranks.

Piecepack	(FIDE) Chess	Shatranj	Xiangqi
Null	Pawn	Soldier	Soldier
Ace	Knight	Horse	Horse
Two	Bishop	Elephant	Elephant
Three	Rook	Chariot	Chariot
Four	Queen	Ferz	Advisor
Five	King	King	General

Table 3.1: The natural links between piecepack ranks and chess ranks

3.1 (FIDE aka Western) Chess

Players 2

Length 30-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Ron Hale-Evans, Mark A. Biggar, and Trevor L Davis

Version 2.0

Version Date 2019-05-18

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3.1.1 Description

(FIDE aka Western) chess is a classic board game playable with a single piecepack.

3.1.2 Setup

FIDE chess is played on an 8-by-8 board made with the backs of 16 tiles. Have each player sit across from each other and give each player all the pieces of two suits (i.e. “astronomical” versus “power” suits or “dark” versus “light” suits) and place them as in Figure 3.1 making sure that the two “4” coins used as pawns are placed in the left column so they can be easily found if necessary for queen promotion.

3.1.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/171/chess>

The Chess Variants Pages <https://www.chessvariants.com/d.chess/chess.html>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/game/398/chess>

Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/chess>

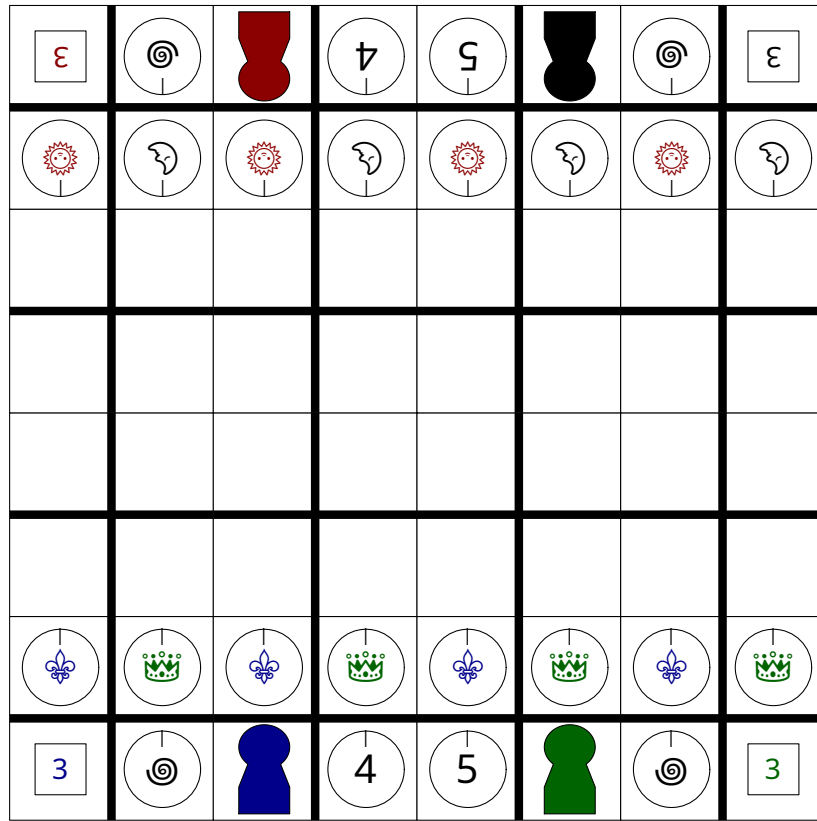


Figure 3.1: (FIDE) chess starting diagram

3.2 Alice Chess

Players 2

Length 30-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 1.0

Version Date 2019-05-18

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3.2.1 Description

Alice chess is chess variant invented in 1953 by V.R. Parton played on two boards.

3.2.2 Setup

If you only have one piecepack then Alice chess is played on the points of two 8-by-8 boards each made with the backs of 9 tiles¹. Have each player sit across from each other and give each player all the pieces of two suits (i.e. “astronomical” versus “power” suits or “dark” versus “light” suits) and place them as in Figure 3.2 making sure that the two “4” coins used as pawns are placed in the left column so they can be easily found if necessary for queen promotion.

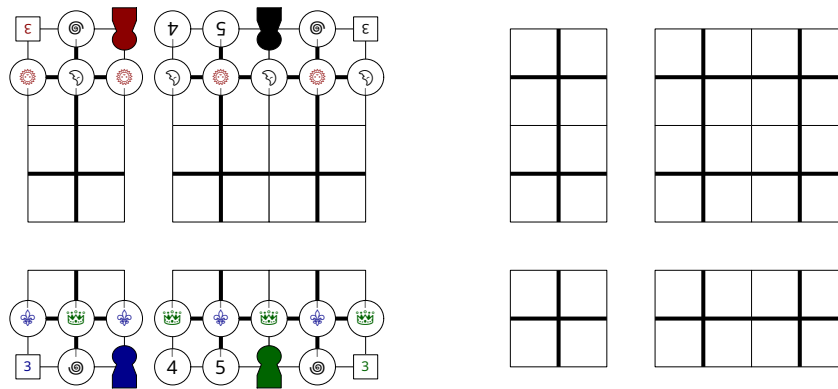


Figure 3.2: Alice chess starting diagram

¹If you have more than one piecepack simply make two 8-by-8 boards each made with the backs of 16 tiles.

3.2.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/134603/alice-chess>

The Chess Variants Pages <https://www.chessvariants.com/other.dir/alice.html>

Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice_Chess

3.3 Chaturaji (Chaturanga for four players)

Players 4

Length 10-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 2.0

Version Date 2019-05-18

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3.3.1 Description

Chaturaji aka Chaturanga for four players aka Choupat is an old four-person chess variant. The diceless version is playable with a single standard piecepack, the version with dice either needs an additional two dice (preferably four-sided) or alternatively 2-4 extra game pieces (i.e. pawn saucers) to free up two piecepack dice from game piece duty.

3.3.2 Setup

Chaturaji is played on an 8-by-8 board made with the backs of 16 tiles. Each player needs 8 game pieces of the same suit: 1 king (piecepack pawn), 1 horse (ace-valued coin), 1 boat (2-valued coin), 1 rook (3-valued piecepack die or pawn saucer), and 4 pawns (remaining 4 coins face down). Ownership of horses and boats are distinguished by orientation. Figure 3.3 shows the recommended setup.

3.3.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/18011/chaturanga>

The Chess Variants Pages <http://www.chessvariants.com/historic.dir/chaturang4.html>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/download/90/four-handed-dice-chess-leaflet>

Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chaturaji>

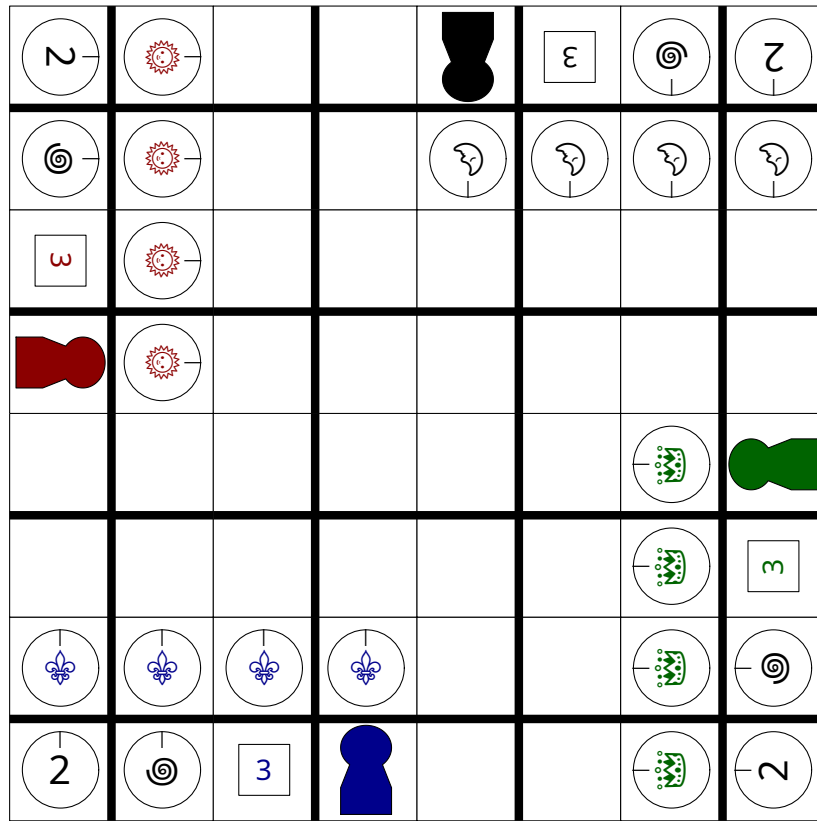


Figure 3.3: Chaturaji starting diagram

3.4 Four seasons chess

Players 4

Length 10-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 1.0

Version Date 2019-05-18

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3.4.1 Description

Four seasons chess is an old 4 player chess variant recorded in the *Acedrex de Los Quatros Tiempos*.

3.4.2 Setup

Four season chess is played on an 8-by-8 board made with the backs of 16 tiles. Give each player all 8 game pieces of the same suit: 1 king (piecepack pawn), 1 horse (ace-valued coin), 1 alfil (null-valued coin), 1 rook (3-valued piecepack die or pawn saucer), and 4 pawns (remaining 4 coins face down). Place the pieces as in Figure 3.4. Ownership of a piece is indicated by orientation (and suit). To promote a pawn to a general flip it over. Since we use the null/ace for alfil/horse (both “leaping” pieces) this means that any number-valued coin must be a general.

3.4.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/104556/four-seasons-chess>

The Chess Variants Pages <https://www.chessvariants.com/historic.dir/4seiz.html>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/game/348/four-seasons-chess>

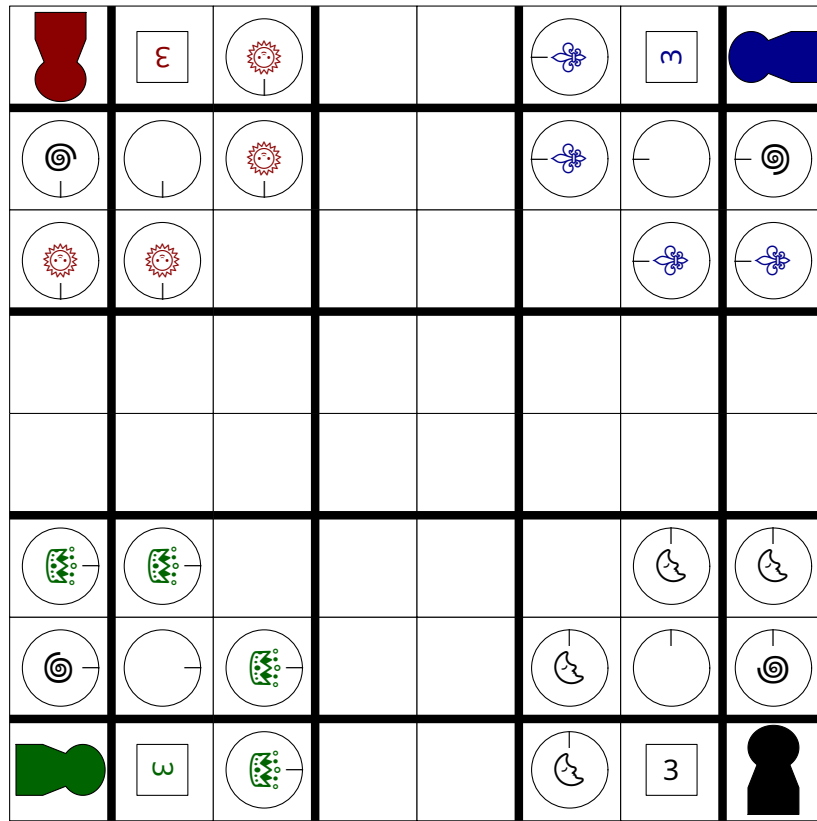


Figure 3.4: Four seasons chess starting diagram

3.5 Ultima Chess

Players 2

Length 30-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 1.0

Version Date 2019-05-18

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3.5.1 Description

Ultima chess is chess variant invented by Robert Abbot and published in Recreational Mathematics Magazine in August 1962 under the name Baroque chess.

3.5.2 Setup

Ultima chess is played on a 8 by 8 board made with 16 tile backs. Have each player sit across from each other and give each player all the pieces of two suits (i.e. “astronomical” versus “power” suits or “dark” versus “light” suits) and place them as in Figure [3.5](#).

3.5.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/25343/ultima>

The Chess Variants Pages <https://www.chessvariants.com/other.dir/ultima.html>

Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baroque_chess

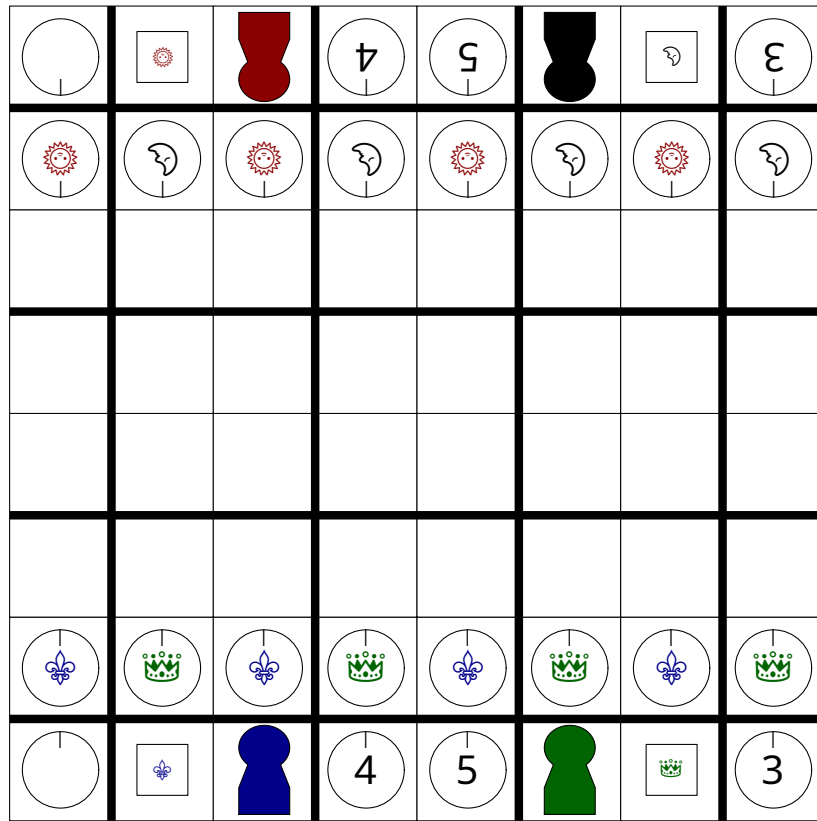


Figure 3.5: Ultima chess starting diagram

3.6 Xiangqi (Chinese chess)

Players 2

Length 10-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 2.0

Version Date 2019-05-17

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3.6.1 Description

Xiangqi (also called Chinese chess) is a popular board game in Chinese communities and is a member of the chess family of games. Like chess it is possible to play with a single piecepack.

3.6.2 Setup

If using a single piecepack divide the suits into two (i.e. "astronomical" versus "power" suits or "dark" versus "light" suits) and give the relevant half of pieces to each player.

Xiangqi is traditionally played on the lines of a board 9 lines by 10 lines with each half of the board visually separated by a "river" and each half containing a 3-line by 3-line "palace". One logical setup is to have each player take out one of their ace tiles and then select 8 other tiles, flip them face down and arrange them into a board 2 tiles by 4 tiles. You should have two 2 tile by 4 tile boards, arrange them so that they are close but separated so that it almost looks like a 4 tile by 4 tile board but with a gap. The separation represents the "river" which some but not all pieces can cross. For artistic embellishment you can fill this gap with blue tiles (i.e. from the arms suit) if you remember pieces can not stop in the river. Each player take their set aside ace tile and put it in the row of tiles closest to them in the middle (i.e. on half of the second tile and half of the third tile). This will represent their palace which their advisors and generals (usually) cannot leave.

Each player has 5 soldiers, 2 cannons, 2 chariots, 2 horses, 2 elephants, 2 advisors, and one general. Figure 3.6 shows the recommended setup which has each player use dice ("3" symbol showing on top) as chariots, piecepack pawns as cannons, ace-valued coins as horses, 2-valued coins as elephants, 4-valued coins as advisors, and one 5-valued coin as a general. Flip five remaining coins face down and use them as soldiers. Always orient all coins towards your opponent's side. If you have pawn saucers use them instead of ace-valued coins for the horses - then every piece that can cross the river (chariots, pawns, cannons, and horses)

is colored and orientation is redundant, otherwise one must distinguish opposing horses by orientation. Elephants, advisors, and general generally cannot cross the river - the one exception is the game ending "flying general" move if there is no piece in between opposing generals.

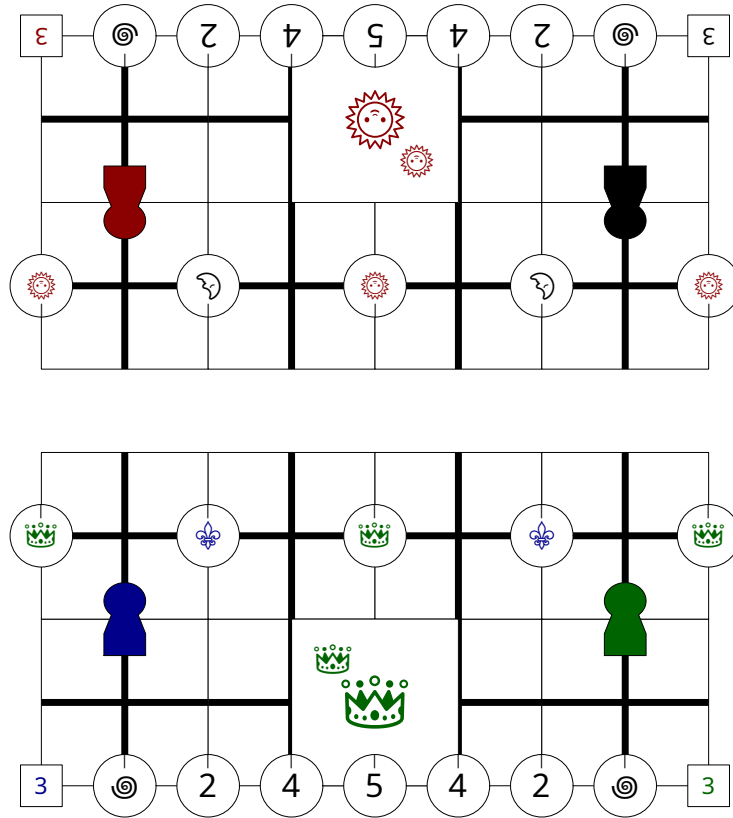


Figure 3.6: Xiangqi starting diagram

3.6.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/2393/xiangqi>

The Chess Variants Pages <https://www.chessvariants.com/xiangqi.html>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/game/75/xiang-qi>

Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xiangqi>

Chapter 4

Morris aka Merels Games

4.1 Nine Men's Morris

Players 2

Length 10-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Dan Burkey and Trevor L Davis

Version 1.1

Version Date 2019-06-29

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4.1.1 Description

Nine Men's Morris is an ancient game that used to be very popular.

4.1.2 Setup

Figure 4.1 shows the recommended setup of the board. Give each player nine of the coin backs of two suits (i.e. "astronomical" versus "power" suits or "dark" versus "light" suits). Before a player is reduced to three pieces there moves are restricted to orthogonal moves to the next tile face either directly horizontal or vertical from that tile (but not across the empty gap in the center of the board). Figure 4.2 shows the moves of the pieces. If you have [\(piecepack\) matchsticks](#) use them to connect tiles where orthogonal moves are possible.

4.1.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/3886/nine-mens-morris>

Cynningstan <http://www.cynningstan.com/game/12/nine-mens-morris>

Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nine_men%27s_morris

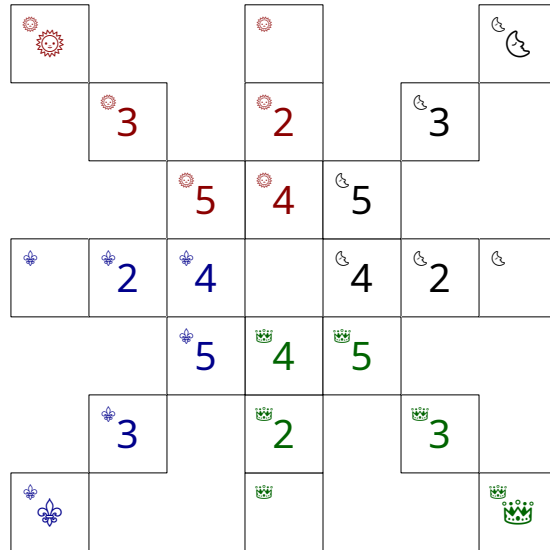


Figure 4.1: Nine Men's Morris starting diagram

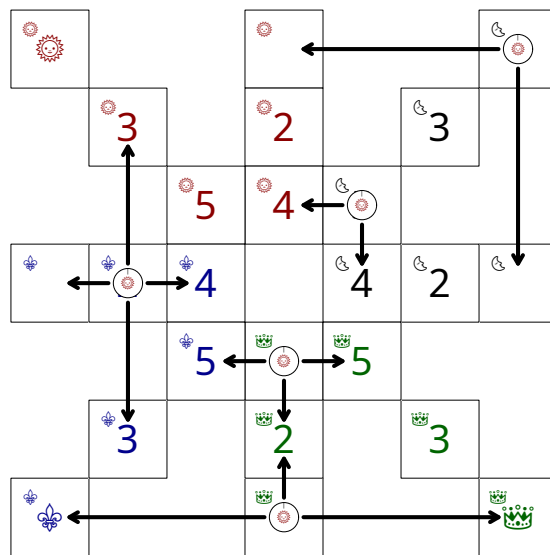


Figure 4.2: Moves of the pieces in Nine Men's Morris. Once a player has been reduced to three pieces their movements are no longer restricted.

4.2 Twelve Men's Morris

Players 2

Length 10-180 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Dan Burkey and Trevor L Davis

Version 1.1

Version Date 2019-06-29

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4.2.1 Description

Twelve Men's Morris is an ancient game that used to be very popular.

4.2.2 Setup

Figure 4.3 shows the recommended setup of the board. Give each player twelve of the coin backs of two suits (i.e. "astronomical" versus "power" suits or "dark" versus "light" suits). Before a player is reduced to three pieces there moves are restricted to orthogonal moves to the next tile face either directly horizontal or vertical from that tile (but not across the empty gap in the center of the board). One can also move diagonally from "3" valued tile faces to either the "ace" or "five" valued tile faces (and vice versa). Figure 4.4 shows the moves of the pieces. If you have [\(piecepack\) matchsticks](#) use them to connect tiles where orthogonal moves are possible.

4.2.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/29080/twelve-mens-morris>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/game/111/twelve-mens-morris>

Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morabaraba>

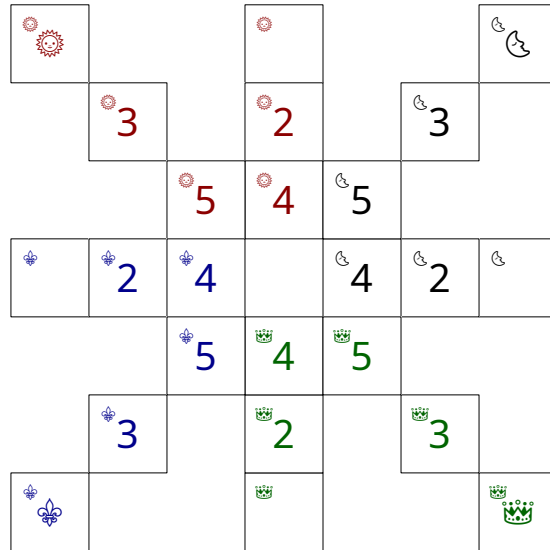


Figure 4.3: Twelve Men's Morris starting diagram

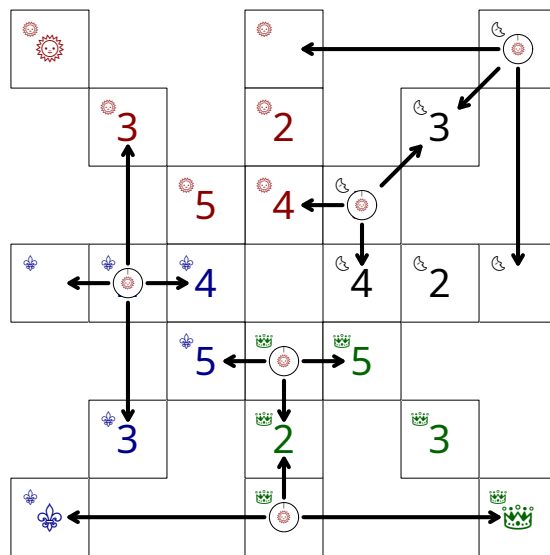


Figure 4.4: Moves of the pieces in Twelve Men's Morris. Once a player has been reduced to three pieces their movements are no longer restricted.

Chapter 5

Other Traditional Games

5.1 Backgammon

Players 2

Length 5-60 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 1.1

Version Date 2019-05-01

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5.1.1 Description

Backgammon is one of the oldest known board games. Like other classic board games like checkers and chess it is also possible to play with a single piecepack. Although not required some players will appreciate extra tokens (each player needs 15 tokens), a doubling cube, 2-4 standard dice, and/or 1-2 dice cups.

5.1.2 Setup

Have each other sit across from each other and give each player all the pieces of two suits (i.e. “astronomical” versus “power” suits or “dark” versus “light” suits). For a traditional U-shaped setup have each player place the tiles face up in a row in front of them, alternating suits to mimic the alternating color scheme of a traditional backgammon board. Place a gap in the middle of the tiles (so there are six tiles to the left and six to the right) to represent the backgammon “bar” of a traditional backgammon board. Each tile will henceforth be called a “point” because on a traditional backgammon board it is shaped like a point. Each points holds between 0-15 tokens of a single player.

Each player needs 15 tokens. If just using one standard piecepack give each player twelve coins (face down), two pawns, and one die. Place their tokens in the appropriate point according to the rules of backgammon.

If playing backgammon for stakes with the doubling cube rule and you don’t have a doubling cube or an extra die then the two die tokens will also have to represent the doubling cube. In such case the token dice should be initially placed with nulls facing. Whenever someone changes the stakes change the die face of the player who has the power to double next to the number of times the stakes has been doubled so far (i.e. an ace face means stakes have been doubled once, 2 means stakes have been doubled twice, etc.). If necessary the other players die face should be changed back to nulls. In such a fashion it is possible to tell from the two token dice how much the stakes have been doubled and who has the power to next double the stakes. Of course if you have an actual doubling cube use that instead or if you have an extra die use it exclusively as a

doubling cube using the “each number represents number of times stakes have been doubled” system.

The other two dice are rolled as “normal” dice (i.e. ace = 1, nulls = 6). A player’s turn ends when they pick up the dice and hand them to the other player. Serious backgammon players usually use dice cups to reduce the possibility of cheating.

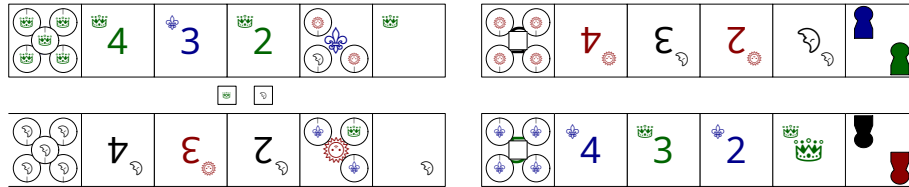


Figure 5.1: Backgammon starting diagram

5.1.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/2397/backgammon>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/game/400/backgammon>

Wikipedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Backgammon>

5.2 (American) Checkers

Players 2

Length 30 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Mark A. Biggar

Version 1.1

Version Date 2019-05-18

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5.2.1 Description

Checkers (aka Draughts) is a classic two-player board game. The English/American version is straightforwardly adapted to the piecepack.

5.2.2 Setup

American checkers is played on an 8-by-8 board made with the backs of 16 tiles. Have each other sit across from each other and give each player all the coins of two suits (i.e. “astronomical” versus “power” suits or “dark” versus “light” suits) and place them as in Figure 5.2. King promotion is the same as in traditional checkers: place another “coin“ on top.

5.2.3 External Links

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/2083/checkers>

Cyningstan <http://www.cyningstan.com/game/399/draughts>

Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_draughts

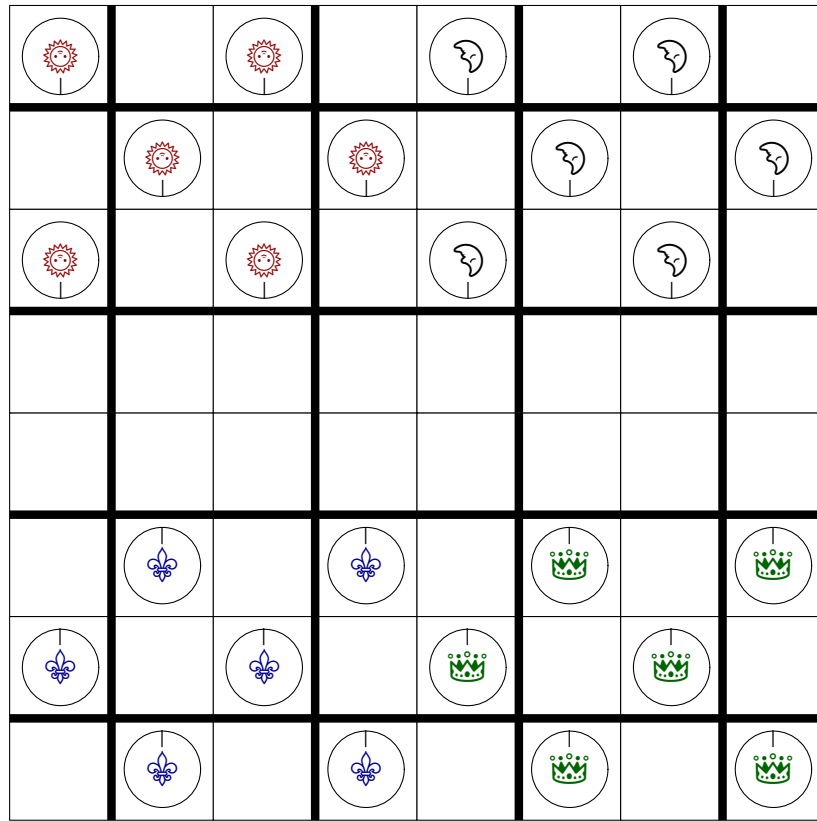


Figure 5.2: (American) checkers starting diagram

5.3 Tablut

Players 2

Length 45 minutes

Equipment Required one standard piecepack

Designer Traditional, adapted by Trevor L Davis

Version 1.0

Version Date 2019-04-09

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5.3.1 Description

Tablut is a historical (hnefa)tafl game played by the Sámi people until at least the 1700s whose rules were written down by the Swedish naturalist Linnaeus in 1732.

5.3.2 Setup

The game is played by two players one of which controls 16 “attackers” and other who controls 8 “defenders” plus a “king”. There is also a “castle” in the center of the board (some modern derivatives also have special corners). There are multiple schemes that can be used to play this game. Visualized in Figure 5.3 is one scheme (“ranks” versus “suits”) which gives the attacking player all the coin faces of rank 2,3,4,5 as the attackers and gives the defending player the remaining coin backs as defenders plus a pawn as the king and use 1-4 piecepack dice as the “castle” (place the pawn on top of the dice to start the game).¹

5.3.3 Rules

BoardGameGeek <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/6121/tablut>

Cynningstan <http://tafl.cynningstan.com/page/170/tablut>

Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tafl_games#Tablut

¹Another scheme could be for the defenders to be four coin “aces” and four coin “moons” plus a “moons” pawn king versus the remaining coin backs as attackers (with a traditional piecepack this give you black-colored coin defenders plus a black-colored pawn versus non-black-colored coin attackers).

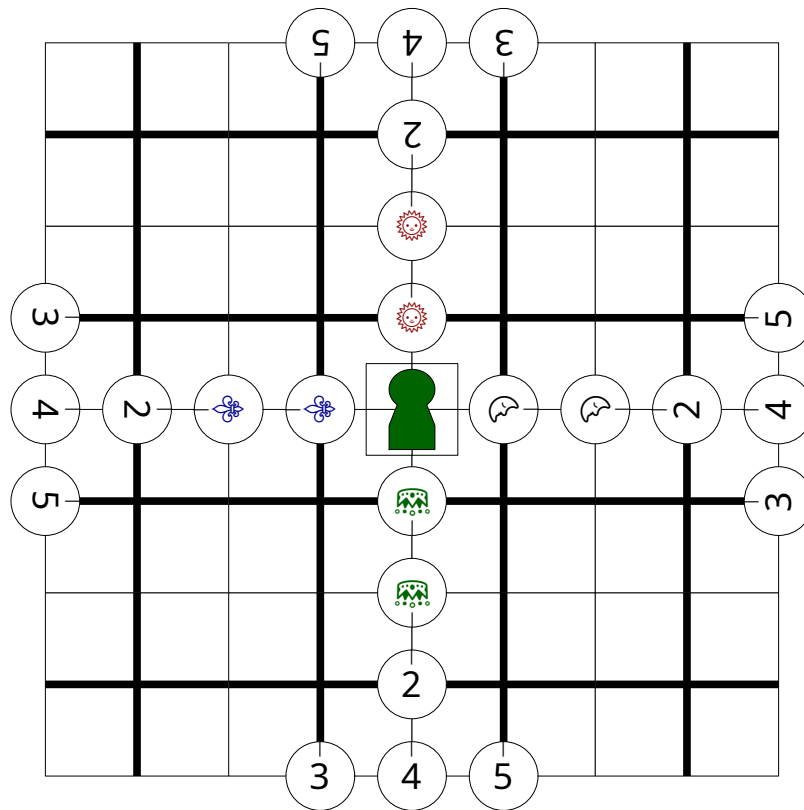


Figure 5.3: Tablut starting diagram