BLOODSTONES

Welcome to Fal, although please do not expect a friendly one. For as long as its inhabitants can remember, strife has been a way of life on Fal. Over the years factions formed from the disparate races, which for reasons known only to themselves, could find no peace with each other.

The ancient Elvish race known as the Dragon Riders long ago mastered the skill of riding the mighty Dragons that roamed beyond the northern regions. There are few who can stand up to the blast of a red dragon when enraged. The Dragon Riders, in alliance with the Lizardmen, have used their steeds to strike terror into their foes.

Away in the hills the various tribes known as the Hill Folk have banded together to resist encroachers on their land. They are also not averse to a little raiding, with their Reivers sometimes descending from the heather clad moors to capture the villages of the plains. The great Giants of the hills are also part of this faction. Their strength and skill in shaping rocks has given them the ability to build many strong forts to protect their lands.

Fal is an old world, where many forces are still not fully understood. The Necromancers have spent more time than most learning the lore of the land. They have gained the ability to bring the dead back to life. Much misunderstood by the other factions, they are shunned as servants of evil. They still have some allies that are willing to fight with them, although they do not make for the best company. The savage Goblins of Horfest are prepared to fight along side the Undead armies created by the Necromancers.

Holding their own among these powerful factions are the noble Horse Lords. They have no truck with Giants, Dragons or the Undead. Their armour-clad knights are brave in battle and well led by their dashing lords. An industrious faction, they are more organised than their opponents, making up for a lack of magic or height with an abundance of resources.

In a world connected by placid seas and traversable straits, piracy is commonplace. One group of pirates grew in strength until they were powerful enough to challenge any of the other factions. Raised from youth to be skilled in both seafaring and axe-based combat, the adventurous Corsairs are the most feared faction on the open seas. Yet while their skill on the water is unmatched, they have never mastered horses and prefer coastal engagements.

The Chaos Horde are descended from a band of Horse Lords who were defeated in an uprising hundreds of years ago. They fled east and have lived on the Great Plains ever since. Choosing to never settle, the Chaos Horde prefer only to fight when they have to, using fear and intimidation to extract tribute from the local villagers. Recently the disparate bands of horsemen have united under the banner of a charismatic new leader and seek to expand into new territory.

Overview

'Bloodstones' is a two to six player fantasy wargame featuring asymmetric factions. You take control of a faction, which has its own special units and powers, all encompassed within a unique 'tile' system.

Your aim is to gain Victory Points by constructing villages, capturing other players' villages and winning battles.

Your tiles will be placed in a bag, from which you will draw to make up your 'hand'.

The tiles are multi-use. When placed on the map they become units. While in your hand they can be used to build other units, move units, improve your strength in battle, construct villages and capture villages.

Build cost ← → **Pip value**

↑
Unit type
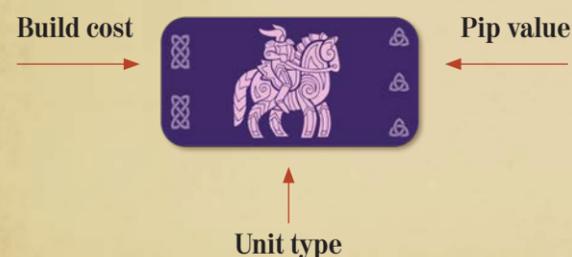
On your turn you can perform as many actions as you wish, in any order. There are three actions to choose from: 'Build Unit', 'Move Units' and 'Battle'.

Pay to build a unit by discarding tiles from your hand.

Move units by spending the pips on other tiles from your hand.

When you fight a battle you draw Battle tiles. You may substitute up to one of these with a tile from your hand.

After completing all of your actions you may construct villages, which you pay for in pips.

You draw back to six tiles at the end of your turn. If you run out of tiles, then you score points for your villages and place your tiles back in the bag so that they are available to be drawn again.

The game ends when players have scored their villages a certain number of times, three times with two players and twice with three or more players.

Components

There are six factions, each with its own set of pieces comprising of:

| 36 Faction tiles | 20 Villages | 1 Citadel | 1 VP Marker | 1 Regroup Marker | 1 Faction information card |

The Necromancers have an additional four Undead tiles, which should not be shuffled in with their other tiles.

The Chaos Horde have 36 faction tiles, one VP marker and one Regroup marker. They do not have any villages or a citadel.

A full list of each faction's units can be found on their respective Information cards and on the back page of these rules.

Other components are:

| 2 Sets of 8 Battle tiles | 2 battle bags | 6 faction bags | 5 small faction bags | 1 travel bag | 6 Maps |

Tile Description

Build cost (0-2)
In order to build a unit, you must discard as many tiles from your hand as indicated by the blocks on its left.

To build this unit, you must discard one other tile from your hand.

Pip value (1-5)
You can expend a tile for its pip value, which can be used for movement, combat, constructing or capturing villages.

This tile could grant you a pip value of 4 when discarded from your hand.

↑
Unit type
Once a tile is on the map, it is considered to be the indicated unit.

This tile would be a Swords unit.

Some tiles do not have any indicated cost. They are free to build i.e. without having to discard other tiles. A tile with no unit indicated on it cannot be built, it can only be used for its pip value or to build another unit.

Description Of The Map

Victory point track

Sea area

Plains

Desert area

Regroup track

Note: Space 3 is only used in two-player games.

Mountain area

Forest area

Hill area

River

Note that rivers act as regular borders.

Map suitable for this range of players.

Faction Information Card

Number of tiles of that type available.

Battle modifier.

Unless stated otherwise a battle modifier counts in both attack and defence. Some modifiers depend on terrain, others may only apply if attacking or defending.

Starting The Game

Decide on a map that is suitable for the number of people playing. Each map indicates the range of players it is suitable for.

There are two sets of Battle tiles, each of which has its own bag. A set of tiles should consist of tiles 2,2,3,3,4,4,5,5. Each player then draws two tiles each from one of the bags. Whoever draws the highest total becomes the first player. In the case of a tie repeat the process. Place all of the tiles back in the bag once you have finished.

In clockwise order from the first player select a faction to play. Take the corresponding tiles and Information card for this faction.

We recommend not using the Corsairs with two players. The Chaos Horde should only be used when there are four or more players.

Draw nine tiles from your faction bag. Stand them upright facing you so that you can see them and other players cannot. These tiles form your 'hand'.

Note that the Necromancer player keeps their four Undead tiles to one side, they do not go into the bag.

Place your villages to one side to form a pool that you will draw from.

In reverse player order, place your citadel in a plains, forest or hill area on the map. There must be two empty land areas between your citadel and any other players' citadel.

Immediately after you have placed your citadel you may select a number of tiles from your hand to place in the same area, (or adjacent if placing a ship). You are granted five 'Build Points', which you use to build tiles from your hand. Almost all of the tiles available to you will have a unit type on them. To the left of the tile's unit type is their build cost, indicated by zero, one or two stone block symbols. This is how many other tiles you have to discard to build that unit. If the tile has no build cost then you can simply place it with your citadel. Depending on your hand you may place up to all nine of your starting tiles.

If your citadel is adjacent to one or more sea areas then you may build ships in such areas.

If the Chaos Horde are in play then they always place their units after all other factions have placed their citadel and units, no matter what the order of play is. The Chaos Horde do not have a citadel so choose an area to place their five Build Points worth of units. This area cannot be within two areas of another player's citadel. Note they can build ships adjacent to their starting area. You cannot place your starting land-based units in a sea, mountain or desert area.

Determine player order.

Choose factions.

Corsairs should only be used with three or more players. Chaos Horde should only be used with four or more players.

Draw nine tiles to form initial hand.

Place citadels in reverse play order.

Must be more than two areas away from other citadels.

Cannot place citadel in sea, mountain or desert areas.

Spend five 'Build Points' on initial units. Place in same area as citadel, or adjacent sea area if ship.

Chaos Horde always place last. Choose an area to place initial units in.

Here we can see the six units that the Hill Folk decide to start the game with.

After you have placed your initial units you refill your hand to the standard hand size, which is normally six tiles. If you already have more than six tiles left in your hand then you retain these and do not draw more.

Once a tile has been placed on the board it will be referred to as a unit.

All players place their Victory Point Marker on the zero space of the Victory Point Track, making sure it is not on the '+50VP' side.

The Chaos Horde start the game with 10VPs.

All players place their Regroup Marker on the zero space of the Regroup Track.

IMPORTANT: Although citadels are not standard tiles, for the purposes of these rules they should be regarded as units. When you see the term 'unit' that also encompasses citadels. Villages are not regarded as units.

As the number of tiles in your bag can be significant at certain times you are free to count how many tiles you have left. Other players can also request that you inform them how many tiles you have left.

Units and Villages are limited to your supply, once placed you may not choose to remove from play.

You are now ready to start playing 'Bloodstones'.

THE FACTIONS

A faction power applies to all units in a faction. Special units have their own specific powers.

DRAGON RIDERS

Faction Power – None
Special Units – Two Dragon units. They gain +4 in battle. Nothing can withdraw from them. They can always withdraw from battle as long as they have somewhere to withdraw. Any dragon involved in a successful attack is removed from the map and placed in the discard pile. Dragons are not removed in this way if defending or capturing. They do not pay the standard movement costs, instead they only pay one pip per area moved. They can fly into sea, mountain and desert areas and remain there if they wish.

+4

Discarded after successful attack. All terrain costs one pip to enter. Can always withdraw. Nothing can withdraw from a dragon.

HORSE LORDS

Faction Power – They have a hand size of seven rather than six tiles.
Special Units – No special unit as such but they have two leaders. Note that a leader can move another leader with it for no additional cost. The second leader can then move another unit for no additional cost, e.g. you can move two leaders and another unit and pay the cost of moving just one unit.

Hand size of seven tiles. Two leaders.

HILL FOLK

Faction Power – The cost for moving into hills is two pips. Units can also move into mountains at a cost of three pips.
Special Units – Two Giant units, which gain +2 in battle. If one or more Giants are in a battle then you draw four Battle tiles, no matter the respective size of the forces. Hill Folk also have six castles which are cheaper to build than those of other factions.

+2

Always draw four tiles. Castles cheaper to build. Lower movement cost in hills and mountains.

THE NECROMANCERS

Faction Power – None.
Special Units – Four Necromancer units. If one or more of these are part of a victorious battle then all opposing eliminated units may be replaced with Undead units, if available. Undead units have their own movement phase, where they can move up to two areas without having to pay any movement costs. This includes the ability to move into mountain areas (but not sea areas).

Necromancers may replace all eliminated opposing units with Undead, if available. Undead move up to two areas per turn at no cost.

CHAOS HORDE

Faction Power – The Chaos Horde do not have villages or a citadel. During the set-up phase they always choose a starting location after all other players have done so, irrelevant of the order of play. They choose one area on the board to place their 5 Build Points worth of units (all other rules must be followed). They can build ships in a sea area adjacent to their starting area. They start with 10VPs. During the game the Chaos Horde can build units where they already have units. Note that they can build ships adjacent to where they have units AND they can build units adjacent to ships (but only if there are no enemy units in the same area). They can capture villages DURING their Main Action Phase. This is an action and only one tile can be expended towards the costs. This action can only be performed once during the turn. They do not have a Capture Village phase. At the end of the game they score 2VPs per captured village.

If all units are eliminated from the map, then the next time the Chaos Horde are the active player they can place one unit in an empty area of their choice. They then must pay for this placement. They then continue with their turn as normal. If for some reason there are no empty areas on the map then the Chaos Horde are eliminated from the game.

Special Units – The Chaos Horde do not have any special units but their Cavalry is cheaper to build than other factions and they have two Leaders.

NOTE: We do not recommend that you use the Chaos Horde in a two or three player game.

CORSAIRS

Faction Power — The Corsairs can always withdraw by sea unless they are attacked by dragons. Otherwise it does not matter how many cavalry the attacking force has. When attacking a land area adjacent to one of their ships the defending force can only withdraw if they have one or more Cavalry or have Dragons present. They gain +1 in sea battles. When resolving a battle the Corsairs always choose to substitute a tile last AND their opponent must reveal their Battle tiles, including any substitute tile, before the Corsairs decide whether they wish to substitute or not. This includes battles where the Corsairs are the attacker. When the Corsairs win a battle they gain one extra VP.

Special Units – The Corsairs have no special units. Notice that the Corsairs have no cavalry.

NOTE: We do not recommend that you use the Corsairs in a two player game.

Always set-up last. Start with 10VPs.

Build units where they already have units.

Capture villages during their Main Action phase.

Score 2VPs per captured village.

Can always withdraw by sea (except against Dragons).

When attacking next to ship, defender must have one or more cavalry or dragons to be able to withdraw.

Gain +1 in sea battles. Score +1VP for winning a battle.

PLAYING THE GAME

The order of play will progress clockwise around the table from the first player. When you are the active player you work through the following sequence of phases:

CAPTURE VILLAGES (Excluding Chaos Horde)
MOVE UNDEAD (Necromancer only)
MAIN ACTIONS
CONSTRUCT VILLAGES (Excluding Chaos Horde)
DRAW TILES

If you have drawn all of the tiles from your bag and need to draw more to reach your hand size then place all of your discarded tiles back into the bag and continue drawing. You also score one victory point for each village you have on the board. This is called a Regroup.

You mark the fact that you have regrouped your discarded tiles by moving your Regroup marker one space along the Regroup track.

Play then proceeds to the next player, to the left. Play continues in this manner until the game end condition has been met, which is determined by how many times each player has regrouped.

If there are two players then the game end trigger is when both players have regrouped their tiles at least three times each. If there are three or more players then the game end trigger is when all players have regrouped at least twice each.

A NOTE ON DISCARDING TILES

During the course of the game you will be required to discard tiles from your hand for a variety of reasons. All such tiles should be placed in your discard pile. These tiles should be face-up so they can be seen by other players if necessary. Any units eliminated in battle will also be placed on your discard pile (except for citadels, which are gained by the victorious player).

PHASE 1: CAPTURE VILLAGES

During this phase you may capture villages belonging to other players from areas that contain one or more of your units. Each village you capture will grant you one victory point at the end of the game.

You can only expend one tile in this phase, so you can capture a maximum of five villages each turn.

Score Victory Points when you have to regroup your discard pile.

Two player game ends after three regroups each.

Three player+ game ends after two regroups each.

Score 1VP per village at the end of the game.

You can only expend one tile during the Capture phase.

You can capture any village that is in an area containing one or more of your units. To capture a village from a plain or forest area costs one pip. To capture a village from a hill area costs two pips. You take the captured village and retain it until the end of the game. This is open information.

Dragon Rider units occupy three areas containing enemy villages. It would cost them three pips in all to capture the two villages from the plains and the one from the forest area. An additional two pips to capture the village from the hill area, making a total of five pips in all.

The Chaos Horde are different. They can capture villages during their Main Action phase INSTEAD of this phase. They may still only expend one tile on this action. Captured villages are worth 2VP each to the Chaos Horde.

PHASE 2: MOVE UNDEAD

This phase is unique to The Necromancers.

The Necromancer may move any or all Undead units in this phase. Undead units do not use pips to move but may each move up to two land areas regardless of terrain, including mountains. Undead units may also remain in deserts with no penalty.

Undead can also move by sea, using the standard rules explained later, BUT cannot move into a sea area on their own.

Undead starting in the same area can move to different areas, they do not have to move as a group.

Undead cannot be moved in any other way, so cannot be moved later using the normal 'Move Units' action. They must stop moving as soon as they enter an area containing enemy units and cannot leave an area containing enemy units. Only Undead can be moved in this phase.

PHASE 3: MAIN ACTIONS

In this phase you may perform as many Main Actions as you wish. The actions you can choose from are:

- **BUILD UNIT**
- **MOVE UNITS**
- **BATTLE**

You may perform actions in any order you wish, thus you could build a unit, move, resolve a battle then build another unit. You must resolve all battles before completing this phase. That is, to end this phase you must have no units in the same area as any other players' units.

The cost of capturing a village is the same as the cost to construct the village.

Chaos Horde do not capture villages in this phase. They can capture during their Main Action Phase. They score 2VPs per village.

All Undead can move up to two areas at no cost.

You may perform as many actions as you wish, in any order.

All battles must be resolved before you end this phase.

ACTION: BUILD UNIT

You may choose to build a unit by placing a tile from your hand in an area that contains one of your villages or your citadel. You must pay its 'build cost' to build it.

The build cost of a unit is indicated by zero, one or two blocks to the left side of the tile. To pay this cost you must discard a number of tiles from your hand to match the number of blocks. The tiles you spend to pay this cost are all considered equal, regardless of their unit type, pips or build cost.

Skirmishers are an example of a unit that has no 'build cost' and so can be placed in an area where you are legally allowed to build.

If you build a ship then you place it in a sea area adjacent to your citadel or one of your villages. You may build a ship in a sea area occupied by one or more enemy units. This would mean that at some point during this phase you would have to attack those units.

The tile is placed face-up so other players can see what it is.

There is no stacking limit, you can have as many units as you like in an area. You can have multiple units of the same type in an area, including castles.

As long as you follow the rules above there is nothing to stop you from building your unit in an area containing one or more enemy units. This also applies to building ships. This will lead to battle, but at a time of your choosing, so you could continue building more units in the contested area.

Please note that you could build a castle in a contested area but it would have to eventually attack the opposing units, which would mean you would not gain the defensive modifier for it, which makes it a poor move in most cases.

The Horse Lords wish to build a castle. The cost is two tiles, as indicated by the two blocks on the tile. They decide to discard a ship and a skirmisher. Note that the values on the two discarded tiles have no relevance to the build cost of the castle.

They then place it in an area containing one of their villages.

The Horse Lords then decide to build a ship. This costs one tile, which in this case is a shield. The ship is placed in a sea area adjacent to their citadel, (which also happens to be adjacent to one of their villages).

You can only place a unit where you have a village or citadel.

Pay for a unit by discarding other tiles from your hand. What is on the discarded tiles is of no significance.

Units with no build cost are just placed on the map.

No stacking limit.

You can build in enemy-occupied areas if you have a village there.

ACTION: MOVE UNITS

You may choose to move one or more units by paying for the movement with the pips on one or more tiles from your hand.

Each unit you choose to move costs one or more pips for each area it moves into. The cost for moving a unit is calculated by adding up the movement cost of each area that each unit moves into.

Movement costs are paid for by discarding tiles from your hand to gain their pip values. Unspent pip values are lost, but you may pay for the movement of multiple units with the combined pip values of one or more tiles. That is, if your total movement cost is eight pips and your discard three tiles totaling nine pips, then the extra pip is lost. The costs for moving a unit into an area are shown on your Faction Card, which may vary between factions. Below are the costs for all factions other than the Hill Folk.

Plains 1 **Forest** 2 **Hills** 3 **Mountains** NA **Desert** 1 **Sea** 1

Units may enter areas containing one or more enemy units but may NOT leave an area that contains enemy units. This means that moving or building units in an area that contains another player's units commits those units to battle. If they defeat the opposing forces then they are able to move.

Villages alone do not stop units from moving. You may move in or out of any area that only contains enemy villages.

Castles and citadels cannot move.

Ships can only move to adjacent sea areas.

Note that rivers act in the same way as a border and do not inhibit movement.

Ship Passage by Ship

You can use your ships to move your other units across sea areas. A unit can move along a chain of contiguous ships at no cost, however, you still pay the cost of moving into the final area. Only ships and Dragons can remain in sea areas, all other units have to end their movement in a land area. All units that can move can use Ship Passage, including Dragons and Undead. Ships cannot use ship movement.

You can move one or more units as many areas as you like. Pay for movement with pips.

You can discard one or more tiles to pay for the cost of movement.

Enemy units stop your movement.

Enemy villages do not stop your movement.

Castles and Citadels cannot move.

Rivers are borders and do not inhibit movement.

You can move along a chain of your ships. You pay the cost of entering the destination area.

You cannot move through a sea area that contains units belonging to another player, i.e. a contested area.

Leaders and Movement

When a leader unit moves it can take one other unit with it at no additional cost. Note that the Horse Lords and Chaos Horde have two leaders. It is legal for a leader to move another leader who may also simultaneously move another unit at no cost. In this manner you can move a stack of three units for the cost of one unit.

Dragon Movement

Dragons pay one pip to move into ANY area, including sea and mountain areas. They still cannot move from an area containing enemy units.
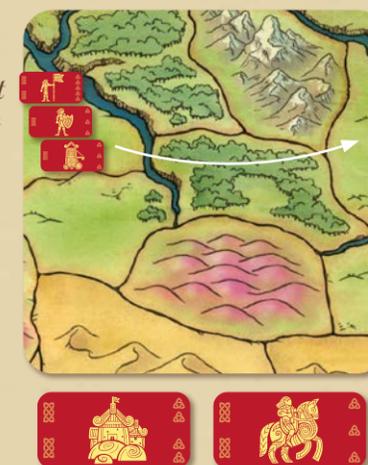
Example of movement

The Dragon Riders move the three units shown here two areas in all. The total cost for movement is six pips. Note that the leader can take one unit with it for no additional cost. Thus it costs four pips to move into the forest and then two pips to move into the plain area.

The Dragon Riders expends a castle and cavalry tile to pay for this movement. The left-over pip is lost.

In the example here the Dragon Rider Swords unit could move as shown for a cost of one pip.

A leader can take one unit with it for no additional cost.

Dragons only pay one pip per area.
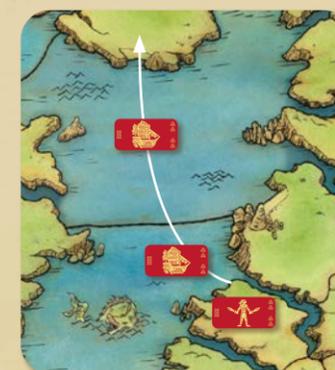
ACTION: BATTLE

Select an area that contains both your units and one or more enemy units. Land and sea combat use the same rules. The attacker and defender take one bag of Battle tiles each.

Carry out the following five steps to resolve a battle:
1. **Defender:** you may choose to withdraw (if possible).
2. **Attacker and defender:** draw Battle tiles.
3. **Attacker then defender:** may choose to replace one (and only one) Battle tile with a tile from your hand.
4. **Attacker and defender:** reveal the three tiles with the highest pip values and calculate their total. Add any battle modifiers from your units.
5. **Attacker and defender:** the player with the highest total wins the battle. If there is a tie then fight the battle again, discarding any tiles used to substitute for battle tiles.

The victorious side gains VPs equal to the number of opposing units that entered the battle.

The losing side eliminates one unit of their choice and retreats the remaining units.

These five steps will now be explained in more detail.

Step One – The defending player has the option to withdraw BUT only if they have the same or more cavalry units than the attacker. See below for more details on withdraw options.

If the defending forces include a castle or citadel then all of the defenders must stay and fight – you cannot partially withdraw some of your units.

The Dragon Riders can withdraw if they have one or more Dragons in their force (except if defending a castle or citadel). You can never withdraw from a combat if there are one or more Dragons in the attacking force.

The attacker cannot withdraw.

Step Two – Each combatant draws a number of Battle tiles from their own bag. The player who has the most units in the combat draws four tiles. The other player will draw three tiles. If the players have the same number of units then they each draw three Battle tiles. You look at your tiles but keep them secret from your opponent.

The Dragon Riders have three units in battle against the Necromancer's two units. The Dragon Riders will draw four Battle tiles while the Necromancers will draw three tiles.

4x   **3x**

Defender withdraw option.
Draw Battle tiles.
May substitute one Battle tile.
Reveal tiles. Only top three count.
Add battle modifiers.

Victor scores VPs.

Loser discards one unit and retreats.

Defender can withdraw if they have same or more cavalry.

Dragons can withdraw.

You cannot withdraw from Dragons.

Largest stack draws four Battle tiles, other draws three.

If the Hill Folk player has a giant present in the combat then they always draw four tiles. Note that this might mean both players draw four tiles.

Step Three – Starting with the attacker, each combatant has the option to substitute ONE of their Battle tiles with a tile from their hand. The value of a tile is equal to the number of pips on it. You cannot substitute more than one Battle tile. The exception to this sequence applies if the Corsairs are involved in the battle. In this case their opponent, whether attacking or defending, must decide whether they wish to substitute first. They then reveal their three tiles before the Corsairs decide whether they wish to substitute or not.

Step Four – Both players now reveal three of their tiles (unless the Corsairs were involved), which will be the ones with the highest values. Any remaining tiles do not count towards your final total, so the maximum raw score you can achieve is fourteen or fifteen if you have substituted. You now add to this total Battle modifiers from the units you have present, as shown on your Faction Information card. These modifiers may depend on whether you are attacking or defending, or the type of terrain you are fighting in.

Note that these modifiers apply to each unit that is present in the combat, so if you had two Sword units then you would gain +2 to your total, one per unit.

Step Five – The side with the highest final total is the winner. Place all Battle tiles back in their own bag and any tiles used to substitute Battle tiles are discarded.

If the battle ends in a tie and the defender has one or more Shield units present, then they win the battle. Otherwise you must fight the battle again from step two, i.e. the defender cannot now choose to withdraw. Remember that any tiles used to substitute are discarded, they cannot be used again in the re-fight.

The victorious player gains VPs equal to the number of units in the opposing force (before casualties). Mark these points by moving your Victory Marker up the Victory Point track. A citadel counts as one unit. If your marker reaches the end of the track then flip it to its +50VP side and move it back to the start of the track. The Corsairs gain one extra VP when they win a battle.

The losing side must eliminate one unit of their choice, placing it in their discard pile. They must then retreat all of their remaining units. See below for more details on how to retreat. Villages remain in place, they are unaffected by battle.

Note that if the defender substitutes tiles during combat they do NOT draw replacements at the end of combat. This will mean they will begin their turn with less than their normal hand size.

If the defender has to eliminate their citadel then they give it to the attacker, who will score a bonus of five VPs at the end of the game.

Giants always draw four tiles.

May substitute one tile.

Corsairs get to see opponent's tiles before substituting.

Only count the top three tiles.

Shields win tied battle if the defender, otherwise re-fight battle.

Victor scores points equal to number of units in opposing army.

Corsairs gain +1 VP in battle.

Loser loses one unit and retreats.

Villages not affected.

A NOTE ON BATTLE MODIFIERS

Each race has an information card which indicates whether a unit gains a Battle modifier. Battle modifiers are shown to the right of the unit image. Most modifiers apply both in attack and defence. Some modifiers are situational, either depending on terrain or whether the faction is attacking or defending, e.g skirmishers only gain their modifier if they are in forest.

CLEAN-UP

After the battle has been resolved make sure all Battle tiles are returned to their own bag. Any tiles used to substitute Battle tiles are discarded.

WITHDRAWAL AND RETREAT RULES

If you choose to **withdraw before battle** or are **forced to retreat** as a result of losing the battle then the following rules apply.

You may choose to withdraw before battle occurs if you are the defender and you have the same or more cavalry units present than the attacker (note that if each side has no cavalry then the defender can withdraw). You can also withdraw if you have a dragon present, no matter what the attacker has present. You cannot withdraw if the attacker has one or more Dragons present. You cannot withdraw if you have a castle and/or citadel present, even with dragons.

You can withdraw or retreat to one adjacent area that contains one or more of your pieces (units and/or villages) or an area that is empty. You cannot withdraw or retreat to an area that only contains pieces belonging to another player, including villages. Note that this means you could withdraw or retreat from a battle to an area where another battle will occur as long as you already had some pieces of your colour in that area.
All withdrawing or retreating units must end up in the same area.

If due to terrain restrictions only some units can withdraw or retreat to an area then any units that cannot withdraw or retreat are eliminated. Otherwise, all units must withdraw or retreat together.

Note also that normally your units can move through areas containing just enemy villages but that when withdrawing and retreating this is no longer the case. If it helps simply imagine all of the villagers emerging from their cottages with pitchforks ready to harry your demoralised army.

It is also the case that you could withdraw or retreat to an area that contains one or more of your villages and enemy units belonging to a non-active player. In this case the next active player would be obliged to attack the opposing units during their turn. Only the active player is ever regarded as the attacker.

You are allowed to withdraw or retreat to the area that the enemy attacked from as long as the above rules are observed.

Withdraw before the start of combat.

Retreat at the end of combat.

Can only withdraw or retreat to area with something of your colour in or an empty one.

All units must withdraw or retreat to the same area.

You cannot withdraw or retreat to areas containing just enemy villages.

You can withdraw or retreat by sea if you are adjacent to a sea area containing one or more of your ships. This is handled in a similar manner to normal Ship Passage, in that you can withdraw or retreat along a chain of your ships until you reach an area you can legally withdraw or retreat to. You cannot withdraw or retreat through a contested sea area.

Castles and citadels cannot withdraw or retreat. No defending units can withdraw from an area with a citadel or castle in it. After the battle has been resolved any castles and/or citadel will be eliminated, the surviving units can then retreat as normal. Any eliminated castle/citadel counts as a casualty.

A player can only withdraw or retreat if there is a legal place to do so. If a player is forced to retreat and there is no legal area to retreat to then all of the units in that combat are eliminated. Eliminated units go to your discard pile.

You cannot withdraw or retreat to an area that you previously withdrew/retreated from in the same players' turn.

The Dragon Riders are attacking the Horse Lords. The battle is taking place in plains terrain. The Horse Lords cannot withdraw as they have fewer cavalry than the attackers.

The Dragon Riders will draw four Battle tiles while the Horse Lords will draw three Battle tiles.

Each side drew the Battle tiles shown here.

The Dragon Rider decides to substitute a five pip tile for one of the '3' Battle tiles.

The Horse Lords decide to substitute a ship tile for the '2' Battle tile.

Both sides reveal their tiles.

Before adding modifiers the Dragon Riders have a Battle Strength of 12 (4 + 3 + 5). The Horse Lords have a strength of 12 (5 + 3 + 4).

The Dragon Riders add four to their total (+1 for cavalry, +2 for two Lizardmen units, and +1 for the leader). This brings their Battle Strength to 16.

The Horse Lords add two to their total (+1 for the sword and +1 for the shield). This brings their Battle Strength to 14.
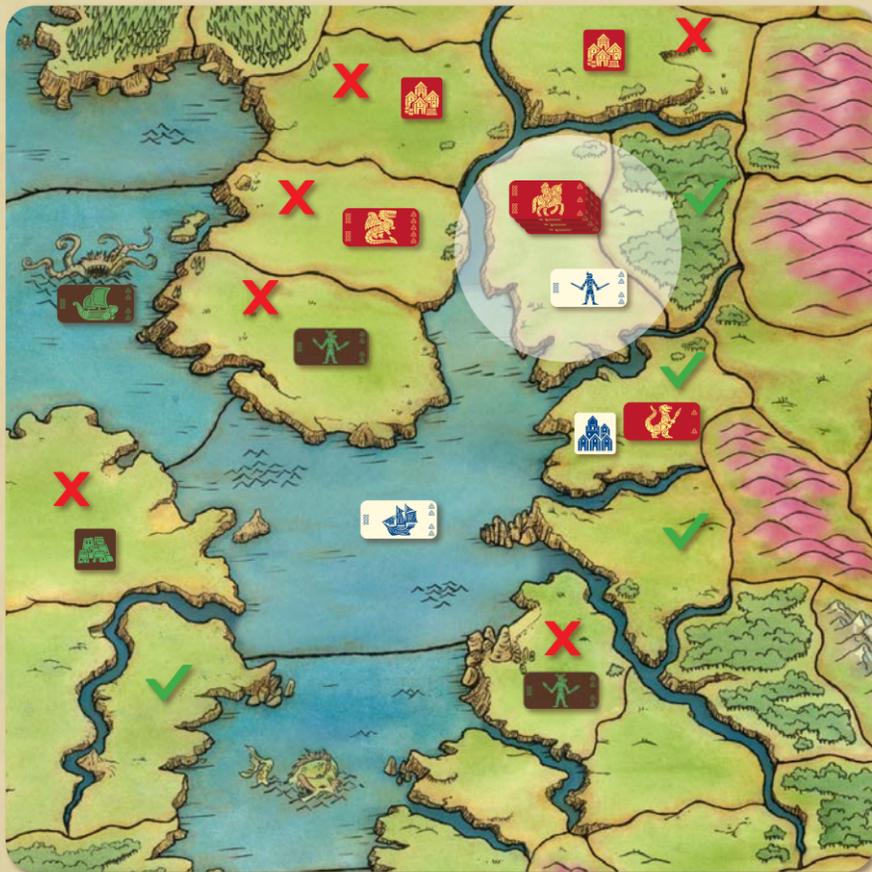
You can withdraw or retreat by sea.

Castles and citadels cannot withdraw or retreat.

The Dragon Riders win the combat and score two VPs. The Horse Lords choose to eliminate the shields and retreat the swords unit to an adjacent area.

The areas the swords unit is legally allowed to retreat to are marked with green ticks.

PHASE 4: CONSTRUCT VILLAGES

During this phase you can place one or more of your villages on the map.

You expend pips to construct villages. It costs one pip to construct a village in a plains or forest area. It costs two pips to construct a village in hills.

Village cost

Plains	Forest	Hills
1	1	2

Plains - 1 pip
Forest - 1 pip
Hills   - 2 pips

You can only expend a maximum of one tile on this action, so the maximum number of villages you can place is five.

You may place villages in areas that are either
a) adjacent to your existing villages
b) adjacent to your citadel
c) adjacent to a chain of your units that connects to either your villages or your citadel (even if those units occupy areas containing enemy villages).
d) in the same area as a single existing village if this is in the Plains.

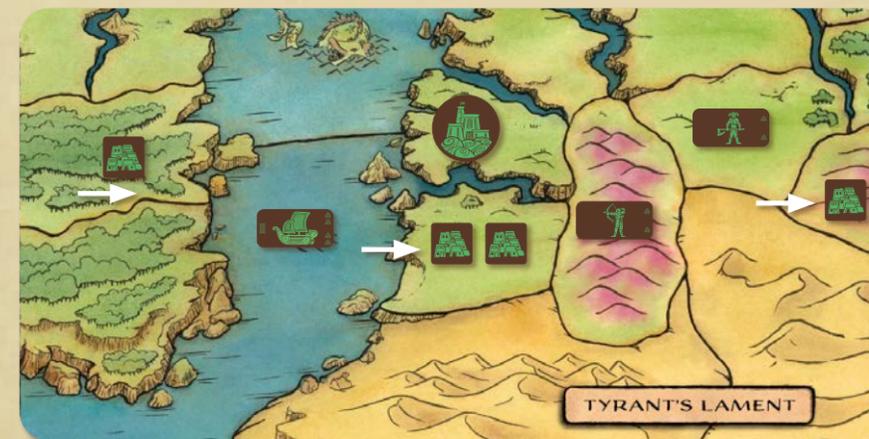You may construct villages adjacent to villages that were placed in this phase.

You can construct a village adjacent to one of your ships if that ship connects back to another of your villages or your citadel, either directly or via a chain of other units.

You cannot place a village in an area containing one or more pieces belonging to another player, it must either be empty or only contain your units.

You can place up to **two** villages per plains area.

You can only place **one** village per forest or hill area.

You cannot place a village in an area containing your citadel, nor can you construct in deserts, mountains or seas. The mountain prohibition applies to the Hill Folk.

The Hill Folk have not built any villages yet. They decide to expend a tile with a value of five pips. They construct two villages in the plains area adjacent to their citadel. The ship allows them to construct one in the forest area. The presence of units in the hills and plains allows them to construct a village in the next hill area along. This costs two pips.

You can only spend one tile during the Construct Villages phase.

Place adjacent to citadel, village, or unit that connects to citadel/village.

Up to two villages in plains area.

One village in forests or hills.

No villages allowed where your citadel is.

No villages in deserts, seas or mountains.

PHASE 5: DRAW TILES

Deserts – You must now check to see if any of your units are in desert areas. Only Goblins, Lizardmen, Dragons and Undead can remain in desert areas. Any other type of unit in desert terrain is eliminated and placed with your discarded tiles. If you forget to do this and another player spots the situation then the units are still eliminated.

You now refill your hand of tiles to six, drawing replacement tiles from your bag. If you are the Horse Lords then you draw back to seven tiles.

REGROUPING

When you need to draw a tile and your bag is empty then place all of your discarded tiles back in the bag and continue drawing. You then score VPs, unless you have already scored points the requisite number of times, as described below. This is referred to as Regrouping.

Each village you have on the map is worth one victory point.

You move your VP Marker up the Victory Point track accordingly. If you reach 50 VPs then flip the marker to its '+50VP' side, move it to the start of the track, and continue to move up as required.

You move your Regroup marker one space along the Regroup track to keep track of how many times you have regrouped.

In a two-player game the game will end as soon as both players have regrouped at least three times each.

With more than two players the game will end as soon as all players have regrouped at least two times each.

Note that a player continues to draw tiles into their hand even after they have scored the required number of times. It may even be the case that you have to put your discarded tiles in your bag again before the game ends. However, if this does occur you do NOT score VPs again.

You do not score points for captured villages at this time. They only count at the end of the game.

OMG I'VE BEEN WIPED OUT!

In the extremely unlikely event that you lose all of your villages and your citadel then you can construct a village in any empty area, after which you would place villages according to the standard rules. The Chaos Horde have their own rules to determine what happens if they are wiped off the map.

Units may die if still in desert.

Draw back to six tiles.

Horse Lords draw back to seven tiles.

Score VPs when you regroup your tiles.

Three regroups in two-player game, otherwise two regroups.

You do not score more points if you have reached the set number of regroups.

ENDING THE GAME

A two-player game end is triggered when both players have regrouped three times.

A three-plus player game end is triggered when all players have regrouped twice.

Note that the player who triggers the end of the game still scores all their villages, if applicable.

Resolve all remaining battles in player order, starting with the player to the left of the one who triggered the end of the game. The active player resolves any battles they are involved in and then draws their hand back to its normal size. No other actions can be performed during this process.

All players now capture all enemy villages in areas where they have one or more units. No pips are expended for this purpose and there is no upper limit on the number of villages that can be captured in this manner.

Players now score additional end game points for villages they have captured, each one being worth one VP. The Chaos Horde score two VPs per captured village. A player will also score five VPs for each citadel they have captured.

The player with highest total is the winner.

In the case of a tie the tied player who has the most villages on the map is the winner. If there is still a tie then the player who has gained the most Victory Points from capturing villages and citadels. Any tied situation after that remains tied.

2 Players = 3 Regroups each
3+ Players = 2 Regroups each

Resolve any battle situations.

All players capture villages.

Captured villages score 1VP.

Chaos Horde score 2VPs per village.

Captured citadel scores 5 VPs.

Faction Cards

Dragon Riders

20 🏛️ 1 🔴 1 🔴

4 SKIRMISHERS +1 in forest.

4 SWORDS +1

4 SHIELD +1 when defending. Win ties when defending.

4 CAVALRY +1 in plains.

4 LIZARDMEN +1 when attacking. May remain in deserts.

2 SIEGE ENGINE +2 against castle or citadel.

1 LEADER +1 Move one additional unit with leader for no additional cost.

5 SHIP +1 allows land units to cross sea areas.

4 CASTLE +3 when defending.

2 DRAGON +4 If a dragon is part of a successful attack then it's removed from the board and placed in the discard pile. A force with dragons in can withdraw (unless defending castles/citadel). No opposing force can withdraw from dragons. It costs one pip to move a dragon into any type of terrain, including mountains. Dragons can remain in desert, mountains, and sea areas.

2

1 CITADEL +5 when defending.

Necromancers

20 🏛️ 1 🔵 1 🔵

4 SKIRMISHERS +1 in forest.

2 SWORDS +1

2 SHIELD +1 when defending. Win ties when defending.

4 CAVALRY +1 in plains.

8 GOBLINS +1 when attacking. May remain in deserts.

2 SIEGE ENGINE +2 against castle or citadel.

1 LEADER +1 Move one additional unit with leader for no additional cost.

5 SHIP +1 allows land units to cross sea areas.

4 CASTLE +3 when defending.

4 NECROMANCER +1 If one or more Necromancers are part of a winning battle then they may replace each eliminated enemy unit with one Undead unit.

4 UNDEAD +1 You can move some or all of your Undead up to two areas during the Move Undead phase. This is the only time they can move. They ignore terrain costs. They can enter Mountain areas and remain in deserts. They can move by sea using ships.

1 CITADEL +5 when defending.

Horse Lords

20 🏛️ 1 🔵 1 🔵

4 SKIRMISHERS +1 in forest.

6 SWORDS +1

4 SHIELD +1 when defending. Win ties when defending.

6 CAVALRY +1 in plains.

2 SIEGE ENGINE +2 against castle or citadel

4 CASTLE +3 when defending.

2 LEADER +1 Move one additional unit with leader for no additional cost.

5 SHIP +1 allows land units to cross sea areas.

3

SPECIAL POWER: HAND SIZE OF SEVEN TILES.

1 CITADEL +5 when defending.
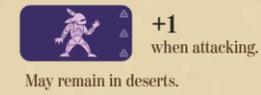
Hill Folk

20 🏛️ 1 🟢 1 🟢

4 SKIRMISHERS +1 in forest.

2 SWORDS +1

4 SHIELD +1 when defending. Win ties when defending.

4 CAVALRY +1 in plains.

4 REIVERS +1 when attacking.

2 SIEGE ENGINE +2 against castle or citadel.

1 LEADER +1 Move one additional unit with leader for no additional cost.

5 SHIP +1 allows land units to across sea areas.
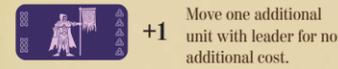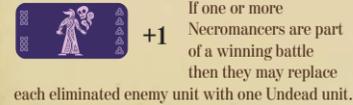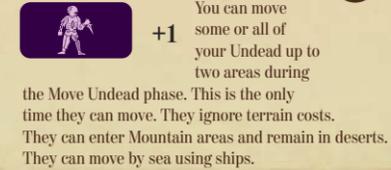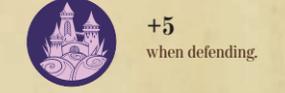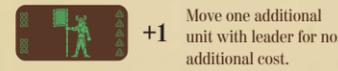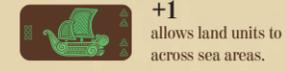
6 CASTLE +3 when defending. Note that Hill Folk castles are cheaper to build than those of other races

2 GIANT +2 Always draw four tiles if giant present in battle.

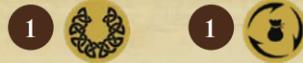**2**

1 CITADEL +5 when defending.

Chaos Horde
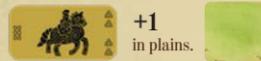
1 ⚬   1 💰

10 CAVALRY
+1 in plains.

20 HORDES
+1 when attacking.

2 LEADER
+1 Move one additional unit with leader for no additional cost.

2 SHIP
+1 allows land units to cross sea areas.

2

SPECIAL POWER:

Choose area to place initial units in after all other players have placed citadels. You start with 10VPs.

You build units where you have other units. Ships can be built adjacent to land units and vice versa.

You may capture villages as an action during your Core Actions phase instead of during the Capture Village phase. Only once per turn and limited to expending one tile.

Score 2VPs per captured village at the end of the game.

Your Cavalry are cheaper to build.

Corsairs

20 🏛   1 ⚬   1 💰

4 SKIRMISHERS
+1 in forest.

12 AXES
+1

4 SHIELD
+1 when defending. Win ties when defending.

1 SIEGE ENGINE
+2 against castle or citadel.

2 CASTLE
+3 when defending.

1 LEADER
+1 Move one additional unit with leader for no additional cost.

8 SHIP
+1 allows land units to cross sea areas.

4

1 CITADEL
+5 when defending.

SPECIAL POWER:

You gain +1 when fighting at sea. Your land units can retreat by sea when defending (except from dragons). If you're attacking adjacent to one of your ships, then the defenders can only retreat if they have one or more cavalry present (or dragon). You may substitute a battle tile after the other side has revealed their tiles. You gain +1 VP for winning a battle.

Strategy Tips

While it can be fun discovering the correct strategies to employ in a new game it is also the case that players can become frustrated if they make a series of elementary errors. What follows is a brief overview of do's and don'ts, plus some handy tips. Please feel free to ignore these if you so wish.

FACTION BALANCE – The effectiveness of each faction varies depending on what other factions are in play and which map you have chosen to play on. For the less experienced player I would recommend the Dragon Riders or Horse Lords, their powers being the easiest to understand. The most challenging faction to play are the Necromancers, as their main power depends on other players making mistakes. I would not recommend playing the Chaos Horde until you have some experience of playing the other factions. They dramatically change the dynamic of the game, so newbies should stay away from them for now.

CITADELS – The placement of your citadel is a crucial part of your strategy. Do not feel you have to hide it away from your enemies. It is a well-defended location and can form the corner-stone of your defence. Find a choke-point on the map and use it to dominate that region. If the Dragon Riders are in the game it is advisable to build an additional castle in the same area, Dragons are excellent at burning citadels to the ground.

INITIAL BUILD – It is nearly always best to build your most expensive units with the five free Build Points at the start of the game.

FOCUS ON VILLAGES TO BEGIN WITH – Although this is a wargame do not feel that you have to charge into battle as soon as possible. In the first half of the game you should focus on getting as many of your villages down as possible. Of course, you also have to defend your villages. Do not construct them where you cannot easily defend them from capturing. You should be aiming to have all twenty of your villages down before you regroup for the first time.

HAVE A STRIKE FORCE – You should have one main army. This should be positioned so that it can threaten in multiple directions. You can still have single units on the board to delay invaders, but the heavy lifting will be done by your main army.

BATTLE – When attacking you should try to be almost assured of victory. Anything less than a +2 advantage in Battle modifiers is taking a big risk. If possible try to reach +3 or higher as then your chances of losing are very small. Try to keep a 5 pip tile in hand in case of a bad draw.

WITHDRAW OR RETREAT PATHS – If you venture into enemy territory with your main army make sure you always have a safe retreat path. Your enemy can build units very quickly to oppose you, so be careful.

SHIPS – Ship movement is very powerful. Dominating a number of connected sea areas is an effective strategy, allowing you to move your forces around quickly. You need to decide early in the game whether you intend to attempt to control a sea region. If you do then it is best to place your citadel next to a sea area and get your ships out as soon as you can.

USE OF TERRAIN – Generally most battles will happen in the plains, as movement is easier. However, dominating the hill areas can be an effective way of controlling the surrounding areas. A well-defended village in the hills allows you to build units there which can then easily move into surrounding areas. Be careful of deserts, they are hard to defend against, unless you are the Dragon Riders or Necromancers.

TILE TEMPO – Do not feel you have to burn through your tiles as fast as possible. As the game ends when all players have had an equal number of village scoring there is some benefit to being the last player to have a turn. At the same time you may go for a fast-burn strategy to get more use from your tiles.

END OF GAME – Be aware that all players will be able to capture at the end of the game. You should try to position yourself so that you can capture as many villages as possible while defending your own villages, which is easier said than done. This is why being the last player can be very powerful, as you do not have to worry about protecting your villages after you have finished your final turn.

DRAGON RIDERS – If you are the Dragon Riders then you have a range of strategies open to you. You want to get both of your Dragons on the map as soon as possible. Although they are very powerful when attacking they are also excellent defenders, as they can always withdraw or retreat if outnumbered. As you must discard them if they win a battle make sure it's an important one. One trick is to use them just before you score your villages so that you can rebuild them when you have regrouped. When defending against Dragons a thin line is best. Dragons are unlikely to attack an individual unit as they are also lost at the end of the battle.

HORSE LORDS – The Horse Lords are the most nimble of the six factions. If you combine their two leaders into a main army with a good amount of cavalry then they can be tough opponents. The Horse Lords can also react quickly to situations, such as invading armies. You should not be afraid of taking a central position on the map. The more enemies close to hand the better for you as you can switch your forces around very quickly. Remember, winning battles is a good source of Victory Points.

HILL FOLK – The Hill Folk are the best at defending, as they have more castles than any other race, which are also cheaper to build. A good strategy is to dominate a region and build a wall around it. You can then build your villages in the defended region. However, just getting all of your villages down is not enough to win the game. You need to score some victories in battle as well. As the Hill Folk the hills are your friend. Make good use of them to threaten your opponents and give you the opportunity to descend on vulnerable forces.

NECROMANCERS – The Necromancers are the toughest faction to play. Your power depends on getting your Undead into play. You need to build a strike force based around one of your necromancers, which you can then use to pick-off any weak forces. A careful opponent may not give you such an opportunity so you may have to employ some cunning. It sometimes pays to create tempting targets for you opponents, such as the position of your villages, and then swoop on them when they take the bait. Although there are four Necromancer units in the tile mix it is best to build only one. The others should remain in your tile rotation to grant their five pip value. When playing against the Necromancers your main aim should be to avoid losing any battles, which means making sure your forces are well-deployed and have plenty of cavalry support. Castles are not always the best thing to build against the Necromancers.

CHAOS HORDE – The Chaos Horde have the most unusual powers of the present range of factions. Their ability to build units where they already have units combined with being able to capture villages during their Main Action phase changes the dynamic of the game. If you are playing them then you should avoid building too many units at first. You can send small forces out to different parts of the board, preferably cavalry units, and wait for your enemies to make a mistake. Any undefended villages are yours for the taking. You can concentrate your forces very quickly and knock holes in all but the strongest defences. The main weakness of the Chaos Horde is that they can easily be surrounded and eliminated. With no villages to act as withdraw or retreat paths you need to consider protecting your flanks from such an envelopment. If you are not the Chaos Horde then be very afraid. Construct your villages carefully where they can easily be protected and look for opportunities to surround them.

CORSAIRS – It should go without saying that the sea is your friend. With more ships than any other faction and an additional modifier in sea combat you have the ability to dominate any sea area. Your empire should be built around this strength as going too far from the sea leaves you vulnerable. Without any cavalry you can only withdraw easily if next to your ships, so venture inland at your peril. Having said that your ability to see your opponent's Battle Tiles before deciding to substitute makes your Shield units very powerful. When defending with one of these units you only have to tie to win the battle. Sometimes it is worth playing the numbers game by forcing an opponent to attack you and see if you can tie the combat.

Extra Map Rules

RIVERS
Note that the rivers are darker to distinguish from the sea areas.

ADJACENCY
There are some areas on Map 1 for which the adjacency rules aren't 100% clear.

A is adjacent to C B D

B is adjacent to A D E **NOT C**

C is adjacent to A D **NOT B**

D is adjacent to A B C E F G

E is adjacent to B D F **NOT G**

F is adjacent to E D G

G is adjacent to D F **NOT E**

Optional Cutiecorn Rules

Due to events beyond my control it seems that someone thought that Bloodstones would benefit from a cat riding a unicorn – otherwise known as the Cutiecorn. These rules are optional, so if you don't like cats or unicorns then feel free to ignore them.

+1 in plains.

There is one Cutiecorn tile. This should be treated in the same way as a regular unit. At the start of the game it is placed near the edge of the map. It is available to be built by any player. The cost to build it is two Build Points and normal placement rules apply. Note that as you place units in reverse player order the last player in player order will have the first opportunity to build the Cutiecorn.

You treat the Cutiecorn as one of your units. However, as it is not the same colour as your faction if for any reason the unit ends up on its own in an area containing units belonging to another player then it will fall under the control of that player, even if you have villages in the area in question. YOU DO NOT PAY TO MOVE THE CUTIECORN! It moves for free along with one or more of your other units.

The Cutiecorn is a cavalry unit and all rules that apply to cavalry units apply to the Cutiecorn.
The Corsairs have a 'notional' one cavalry when attacking enemy units that are adjacent to their ships. If they have the Cutiecorn in their attacking forces then this would add to that notional one cavalry, thus the enemy would have to have two or more cavalry units present to allow them to withdraw.

If you lose a battle and the Cutiecorn was in the same area (obviously under your control) then the other player gains an additional 3VPs for winning the battle AND takes control of the Cutiecorn.

Bloodstones Player Aid

STARTING THE GAME (P7)
- Randomly determine the first player.
- Draw nine tiles from your bag.
- Choose areas for citadels in reverse player order.
- Start with five Build Points of units in same area as your citadel (or adjacent if ship).
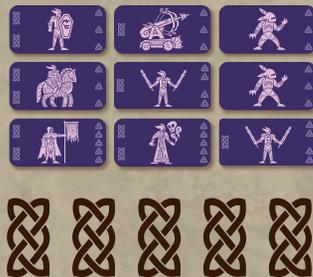
ENDING THE GAME (P23)
- With three or more players the game ends after all players have regrouped twice.

  3 or more players

- With two players the game ends when both players have regrouped three times.

  2 players

BATTLES (P16)

Defender may withdraw if same or more cavalry.

- If a player has more units than their opponent then they draw four Battle tiles rather than three.
- Attacker, then defender decide whether they wish to substitute one Battle tile with a tile from their hand.

Reveal tiles and count the total value of the top three tiles.

VS

Apply unit modifiers.
Highest total wins. Re-fight ties.

STANDARD UNIT (See faction cards)
Each faction has a set of standard units that all have the same strengths and abilities and are referred to by the same name:

SKIRMISHERS	SWORDS	SHIELDS	SIEGE ENGINES	CASTLES	SHIPS	CITADELS
+1	+1	+1	+2	+3	+1	+5
in forest.		when defending. Win ties when defending.	against castle or citadel.	when defending.	allows land units to cross sea areas.	when defending.

IRREGULAR UNITS (See faction cards)
There are also irregular units that all have the similar abilities (+1 when attacking) but are referred to by different names – Goblins (Necromancer), Lizardmen (Dragon Riders), Horde (Chaos Horde), and Reivers (Hill Folk).
Goblins and Lizardmen can survive in deserts.

GOBLINS	LIZARDMEN	HORDES	REIVERS
+1	+1	+1	+1
When attacking. May remain in deserts.	When attacking. May remain in deserts.	When attacking.	When attacking.

SPECIAL UNITS (P9-10)
Dragons – Movement costs are one pip per area (including mountains and sea). Can remain in desert. You cannot withdraw from a dragon. Dragons can always withdraw unless a castle and/or citadel is present. Gain +4 in battle. Are discarded if they win a battle as the attacker.

Giants – Always draw four Battle tiles. Gain +2 in battle.

Necromancers – +1 in battle. Convert defeated units into Undead.

SPECIAL POWERS (P10)
Chaos Horde – May capture villages as a main action (still limited to one tile). May build units where they already have units. Start game with 10VPs.

Corsairs – May always withdraw from battle if able to do so by ship. If the Corsairs are attacking units adjacent to one of their ships then the defender can only withdraw if they have one or more cavalry present. The opposing player always reveals their Battle tiles before the Corsairs decide if they wish to substitute a tile. Gain +1 in sea battles. Gain +1VP for winning a battle.