

Hear ye!
Hear ye!

STORY

You approach the cluster of nobles (and one or two not-so-nobles) that have gathered to hear the herald's proclamation.



"Since the king is old and has no heir, he has declared that the first noble to hold 10 precious gems will succeed him as ruler of this great land."

In a bold outburst, you step into the circle of people. "I shall be the next king!" you declare.

But the faces of the very nobles that you've oft feasted with don't agree.

And so, you find yourself on the edge of a great feudal war

of skill and strategy,
of fortifying and attacking,
of knights & ninjas...

COMPONENTS



Base Game:

100 cards, 30 gems, 6 quick reference cards

24 Peasants	2 Traitors	2 Minstrels
16 Soldiers	3 Highwaymen	6 Archers
9 Knights	2 Princesses	6 Castles
3 Kings	2 Executioners	6 Ladders
1 Queen	2 Heralds	2 Catapults
5 Ninjas	2 Merchants	2 Jesters
3 Dragons	2 Monks	

Expanded Game:

LOCKED UP


7 Guards
2 Keys
Dungeon Card

DRAGON'S LAIR

5 Treasure
2 Dragons
Horde Card
2 Gold Gems

INVADERS

2 Vikings
2 Barbarians
1 Shield Maiden
2 Supply Ships

- 1 This number indicates a card's **STRENGTH**- how many gems a card can take in an **ATTACK** or protect when used to **RESPOND**.
- 2 Each card is labeled **ATTACK**, **FORTIFY**, **SPECIAL ACTION** or **RESPOND** to identify its use in gameplay.
- 3 **ATTACK** cards are labeled **COMMON** , **UNIQUE** , or **PRE-ATTACK**.
- 4 Cards that only interact with specific cards have clarifying icons. For example, this **KNIGHT** can **RESPOND** only to **COMMON** cards.



SETTING UP

- 1 Place five gems (of one color) in front of each player.
- 2 Deal four cards to each player.
- 3 Place the remaining cards face down in the center of the table to form the draw pile. When discarding cards, place them face up beside the draw pile.

Play goes clockwise, taking turns... The player who won a game most recently goes first.

Note: If this is your first game, consider removing the MINSTREL, HERALD, MERCHANT, and MONK cards, so you have less to remember...

Sample setup for 4 players:



WINNING

The first player to own 10 gems at the end of their turn wins the game, becoming ruler of all rival kingdoms...

At least until the next game...

Who **DARES** to defy me?



GAMEPLAY

On your turn, draw two cards. Choose to either: FORTIFY your kingdom, ATTACK a rival kingdom, or play a SPECIAL ACTION. Once a card is played and the action is taken, it is discarded (except FORTIFY cards). If you cannot play a card, or choose not to, you must discard a card.

FORTIFY OR ATTACK OR SPECIAL ACTION

Fortified kingdoms are harder for rivals to attack. To fortify, play one or more cards (labeled FORTIFY) face up beside your gems. Fortifications remain beside your gems until they are destroyed (CASTLE, ARCHER) or discarded (MINSTREL). You may only have one of each kind of fortification at a time.

FORTIFY

You may play as many ATTACK cards as you choose against one other player (until gems have moved). An ATTACK card's STRENGTH is shown on the upper right corner and represents how many gems they can take in an ATTACK (or protect when used to RESPOND). LADDERS, CATAPULTS, and ARCHERS have no STRENGTH because they can only attack fortifications.

ATTACK

◆ COMMON ★ UNIQUE and PRE-ATTACK

You may play one SPECIAL ACTION card on your turn instead of attacking or fortifying. SPECIAL ACTIONS are unstoppable.

SPECIAL ACTION

When a rival ATTACKS you, you may play a RESPOND card to reduce the number of gems taken from you.

RESPOND



Note: Once gems have moved, your turn ends.

Note 2: Your gems must be visible to the other players at all times.

OTHER RULES

If there are no cards left in the draw pile, reshuffle the deck and continue. Each time the deck is reshuffled, the number of gems needed to win is reduced by one. After the first reshuffle, nine gems are needed to win, etc. You may not win passively. If you have the number needed to win when the deck is reshuffled, you must ① gain another gem or ② lose a gem and gain one back to win.

If you run out of gems, you are not eliminated. Being poor will decrease attacks against you, allowing you to rebuild an army to try to make a come back.

If you run out of cards, you must wait till your next turn to draw two more. Be careful! Having few or no cards leaves you vulnerable to attacks.



It is said that music brings peace to a kingdom...

CASTLE

FORTIFY: Play a CASTLE face up to fortify your kingdom. A kingdom fortified by a CASTLE cannot be attacked without a LADDER, CATAPULT, DRAGON, or NINJA.

ARCHER PRE-ATTACK

FORTIFY: Play an ARCHER face up to fortify your kingdom. A kingdom fortified by an ARCHER cannot be attacked except by a NINJA or another ARCHER.

ATTACK: Play an ARCHER (either your fortifying ARCHER or one from your hand) to remove a rival's fortifying ARCHER. You may continue attacking them.

Note: Face up CASTLES and ARCHERS remain in front of a player's kingdom until they are destroyed.

Note 2: ARCHERS have no attack value, except to remove a fortifying ARCHER from another kingdom.

MINSTREL

FORTIFY: Play a MINSTREL face up to fortify your kingdom. At the beginning of your next turn, you must discard the MINSTREL.

RESPOND: A MINSTREL is the only **FORTIFY** card that can be used to **RESPOND** to an attack. When someone attacks you, play a MINSTREL face up in front of you to end your attacker's turn. Return the attacker's card to their hand. Your kingdom is safe until the MINSTREL is discarded at the beginning of your next turn.

Note: A kingdom that is fortified by a MINSTREL is impossible to attack.






some call him shadow...

 **DRAGON** UNIQUE

ATTACK: A DRAGON  steals two gems. He can also burn (discard) any fortifying CASTLE (if there is one). Only a MINSTREL, PRINCESS, or EXECUTIONER can stop a DRAGON.

 **NINJA** UNIQUE

ATTACK: A NINJA  steals two gems. He can climb a fortifying CASTLE (if there is one), and sneak up behind a fortifying ARCHER (if there is one) and kill (discard) him. The only cards that can stop a NINJA are the MINSTREL or EXECUTIONER.

Note: Neither NINJAS nor DRAGONS can be used to RESPOND, only to ATTACK.
Note 2: A DRAGON cannot approach a kingdom that is fortified by an ARCHER.

 **CATAPULT** PRE-ATTACK

ATTACK: Play a CATAPULT at the beginning of your attack to completely destroy (discard) a rival's CASTLE. You may continue attacking if you choose.



 **LADDER** PRE-ATTACK

ATTACK: Play a LADDER at the beginning of your turn against a rival's fortifying CASTLE. This allows you to attack them with your COMMON cards as normal (if there is no ARCHER). Discard the LADDER at the end of your turn.





ATTACK, RESPOND: PEASANTS **1**, SOLDIERS **2**, KNIGHTS **3**, KINGS **4**, and QUEENS **5** are COMMON cards. Their **STRENGTH** (displayed in the upper right corner of the card) indicates either **1** how many gems they can take when attacking, or **2** how many gems they protect when responding to an attack. They can only **RESPOND** to COMMON cards.

Note: You can **ATTACK** or **RESPOND** with only one card at a time (see **LADDER**, **REVOLT** for exceptions).

Note 2: If someone attacks you with a **KNIGHT 3** but you only have one gem left, they only get your one gem. The **KNIGHT'S** excess **STRENGTH** is “wasted”.



TO REVOLT: Stack multiple PEASANTS either to **ATTACK** or **RESPOND**. Seven PEASANTS played together would attack for seven gems. Be careful! A **TRAITOR** could make your whole PEASANT REVOLT suddenly attack you back.

Example: It's your turn. You attack a rival with your **SOLDIER 2**. They respond with their own **SOLDIER 2**. Both cards are discarded. Because no gems moved, you may continue attacking or choose to end your turn.



Next, you attack with your **KNIGHT 3** for three gems. Your rival decides to respond with his **KING 4**, protecting up to four gems. Both the **KNIGHT** and **KING** are discarded and no gems move.



You decide to attack again, this time with a **QUEEN 5**. Your rival responds with three **PEASANTS 111**. Because your attack is stronger (**5** minus **3**), they must give you two gems. Gems have moved, and your turn is over.



The player to your left notices you are close to winning. To your horror, she attacks you with her **KING 4**. Having no **RESPOND** cards left, you must surrender four of your precious gems.





HIGHWAYMAN ANYTIME

RESPOND: Play a HIGHWAYMAN to steal all the gems from a rival's successful attack, (even if they were just stolen from you). A HIGHWAYMAN can only steal gems that were captured by a COMMON card (or an entire REVOLT) or from another HIGHWAYMAN, but not from a UNIQUE card (NINJA or DRAGON).

Note: The HIGHWAYMAN can be played **ANYTIME** (even when the battle doesn't involve you).

PRINCESS

RESPOND: When a rival attacks you with a DRAGON or KNIGHT, you may respond with your PRINCESS (before the attack occurs) to take the DRAGON or KNIGHT into your own hand to use later. Discard the PRINCESS. Because no gems have moved, your rival may continue attacking you.



EXECUTIONER

RESPOND: Play an EXECUTIONER to end **any** attack against you as well as your attacker's turn. The EXECUTIONER is not effective against a LADDER or CATAPULT, only against an attacker with a "head".



Example: A rival destroys your CASTLE with her CATAPULT, and then plays a KING **4** to take 4 gems. You play your EXECUTIONER to kill her KING and end her turn, but your CASTLE is destroyed.

Example 2: A rival's DRAGON **2** attacks you. Your EXECUTIONER kills it before your CASTLE is destroyed and gems are taken.

Attack me.
I dare you!

TRAITOR

RESPOND: Play a TRAITOR to turn an attacking COMMON card against its own kingdom, bypassing any fortifications.

Example: A rival attacks you with a KNIGHT, and you respond with a TRAITOR. This makes the KNIGHT **3** immediately attack your rival back, even though he has a fortifying ARCHER. He responds to the traitorous KNIGHT's attack with his SOLDIER **2**, and he must give you one gem. Because gems moved, his turn is over.



Note: You can play a TRAITOR on an already "traitored" card. Think of them as double agents.

Note 2: TRAITORS have no effect against a UNIQUE card (NINJA or DRAGON).

HERALD

SPECIAL ACTION:

Play a HERALD to force each player to place one of their cards (their choice) face up in front of them. Pick one of the cards and put it into your own hand to use later. Players return any unchosen cards to their hands.



MERCHANT

SPECIAL ACTION: When you play a MERCHANT, pay one of your own gems to blindly pick half (rounded down) of a rival's cards.

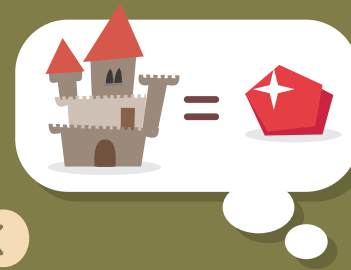


Example: A player has nine cards in their hand. You play your MERCHANT and pay them a gem. After shuffling their cards, they hold them face down while you blindly take half of their cards. Because 9 is an uneven number, you must round it down to 8 and pick 4 cards.

DANCING BEAR

EXCLUSIVE

Play a DANCING BEAR face up in front of a rival to "distract" them, forcing them to skip their next turn.



MONK

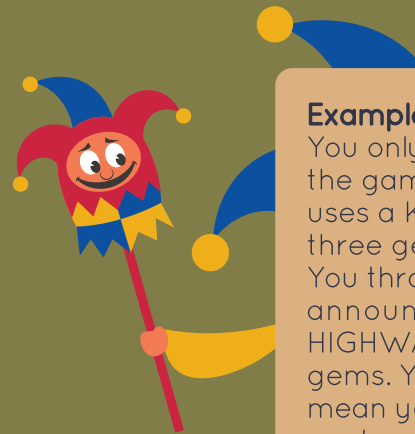
SPECIAL ACTION:

Play a MONK to simultaneously tax **all** rival kingdoms that are fortified by a CASTLE. Taxed kingdoms must give you either **1** two of the cards in their hand (their choice), **or** **2** one of their gems, whichever they prefer.



JESTER

WILDCARD: JESTERS are wildcards that represent any card that you choose (living things, not objects).



Example: You have eight gems. You only need two more to win the game. One of your rivals uses a KNIGHT **3** to capture three gems from another rival. You throw down your JESTER, announcing that he is a HIGHWAYMAN, stealing all three gems. You have 11 gems which mean you've won the game...
...unless another HIGHWAYMAN steals them from you, preventing you from winning.

Note: SPECIAL ACTIONS are unstoppable.

TWO PLAYER VARIATION

Setup: Place 6 gems in front of each player. **Remove all the expansions** from the deck and put them back in the box. Shuffle the cards. Two player gameplay has two phases: drafting and dueling. These phases are repeated until one player has all 12 gems, winning the game.

PHASE 1: Drafting

Deal 15 cards face down between you and your rival, and set the other cards aside. Draw a card. If you decide to keep it, place it in your hand. If you would rather draw another, give the card to your rival and draw another. You may continue giving one card at a time to your rival until you find a card that you decide to keep. Once you keep a card, your rival may begin picking, giving you cards they don't want, and stopping after they draw a card they decide to keep. The person who takes the last card (from the pile of 15) always takes the first turn in PHASE 2.

Who goes first? The player with the fewest gems **always** begins PHASE 1. If both players have the same number of gems, the player with the least number of cards picks first. If both have the same number of gems and cards, the youngest player starts.

Note: Players may have a significantly different number of cards in their hand when PHASE 2 begins.

PHASE 2: Dueling

On your turn, you may **FORTIFY** your kingdom, **ATTACK** your rival (with one or more attack cards until gems move), or play a **SPECIAL ACTION** card. When you are attacked, you may play a **RESPOND** card to minimize losses.

When a player cannot or does not want to play a card at the start of their turn, they must: **1** discard a card if they have four or more cards in their hand **or** **2** call for a re-deal and restart PHASE 1 if they have three or fewer cards in their hand.

Note: When restarting PHASE 1, all face up fortifications must be discarded, but players keep any unused cards in their hand to use in a future PHASE 2.

TWO PLAYER (CONT.)

All cards are played with the same abilities as is written in the rule book EXCEPT:

HERALD- Play a HERALD to force your rival to place **two** cards in front of them. You must pick one of the cards to put in your own hand to use later.

MERCHANT- You must pay **two** gems to blindly pick half of your rival's hand (rounded down).

MONK- Play your MONK to tax a rival's fortifying CASTLE. Your rival must pay you either **two** gems or **three** cards.

MINSTREL- Whenever you **RESPOND** with a MINSTREL, your rival must discard the attacking card as well as two more of their cards. A MINSTREL may **not** be used to **FORTIFY** in the two player variation.



CREDITS

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HONORARY PRODUCERS:

My own dear parents, Sam and Becky McBride, and Lady Rachel the Scholar
My supportive in-laws, Dave and Christine Sullivan, and Sir Tyler the Warrior
Sir Sam the Generous and Lady Leah Coons, my cousin Sir Michael the Musical and Lady Laura Donelson
Herald Stephen Rennie the Trumpeteer
The House of Packham- Sir Joseph the Strong, Lady Rebekah the Archer, Princess Sofia the Falconer, and Jester Link the Tortoise-Tamer

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