

HJKS: RAGNAROK

Ages:
10+

Players:
2-3

Time:
20-40



A GAME OF TACTICS AND TERRITORY

Components

- 1 Rulebook
- 1 Game Board
- 42 Game Pieces (14 each color)
- 12 Piece Selection Tiles
- 4 heXentafl Tiles (1 King, 3 Pawn)
- 1 pack of 18 Rune Power cards

The Story

The year is 900 AD. Three Viking tribes are fighting each other for territory. The Jarls are sending their elite fighting forces of Warrior-Shamans and Sorceresses to engage the enemy forces.

The Seiðkona

Each army is accompanied by a powerful Sorceress. While she cannot attack other units on the battlefield, you will quickly find that her protective magic makes her the most valuable piece on the board.

The Warriors

Your armies are made up of five different sects of shamanistic warriors, distinguished by their totem animal. These fierce warriors spend a period of time in the wilderness, living like their totem animal and learning its ways. They learn to enter an ecstatic battle-fury, or *berserkergang*, making them the most dangerous of opponents. There are even legends that these warriors can shapeshift into their totem animals. These warriors paint their shields with the sigil of their totem to give them power in battle. Some of these sects may be familiar to you, and some have been lost to history.

Berserkr – Totem: Bear (notation 4-3)

Úlfhéðnar – Totem: Wolf (notation 4-2)

Jöfurr – Totem: Wild Boar (notation 5-4)

Hrafn – Totem: Raven (notation 4-2s)

Qrn – Totem: Eagle (notation 3-2)

The Objective

At the beginning of a game of NXS: Ragnarok™, each player has their own territory. While a big part of the game is capturing your opponent's pieces, the way you win is by invading, capturing, and holding your opponent's territory.

The first player to obtain enough spaces of territory is the winner. The number of spaces required is determined before the game begins, but is usually 10. The winning player must announce their victory.

It is illegal to move in such a way that you give your opponent enough territory to win, except:

Close call victory

If moving one of your pieces will give your opponent the requisite number of spaces to win, but will also give you more territory than your opponent, you still win the game.

Example: Moving your piece gives your opponent 10 spaces, but also gives you 11 or more. You win the game in a close call.

Setting up

Place your pieces on the board in one of the pre-determined patterns (more on this later), or randomize the starting position to mix things up.

Throughout the game, all pieces should be kept in alignment with the hexagonal board spaces.

A Turn

During their turn, each player will take two mandatory actions in this order:

- Move one piece (this includes making a capture)
- Rotate one piece clockwise or counterclockwise by one facing

Rune Cards

NXS: Ragnarok™ can be played with or without the Rune Power cards. If you are looking for a more "chess-like" experience (no luck or hidden information), leave the cards in the box. If you prefer to mix things up a bit and add a little random excitement, the cards provide three different ways to play.

Diagrams

In this rulebook, the diagrams use the following color codes:

- Yellow = Movement (Light Yellow = Blocked)
- Red = Piece Capture (Pink = Blocked)
- Green = Territory Capture

Credits

Designer: Kevin R. Kane

Artwork: Kevin R. Kane

Many thanks to all the people that have helped to playtest NXS over the years. Special thanks to Enrique Sedano and Jennifer S. for rune power suggestions.

Legal

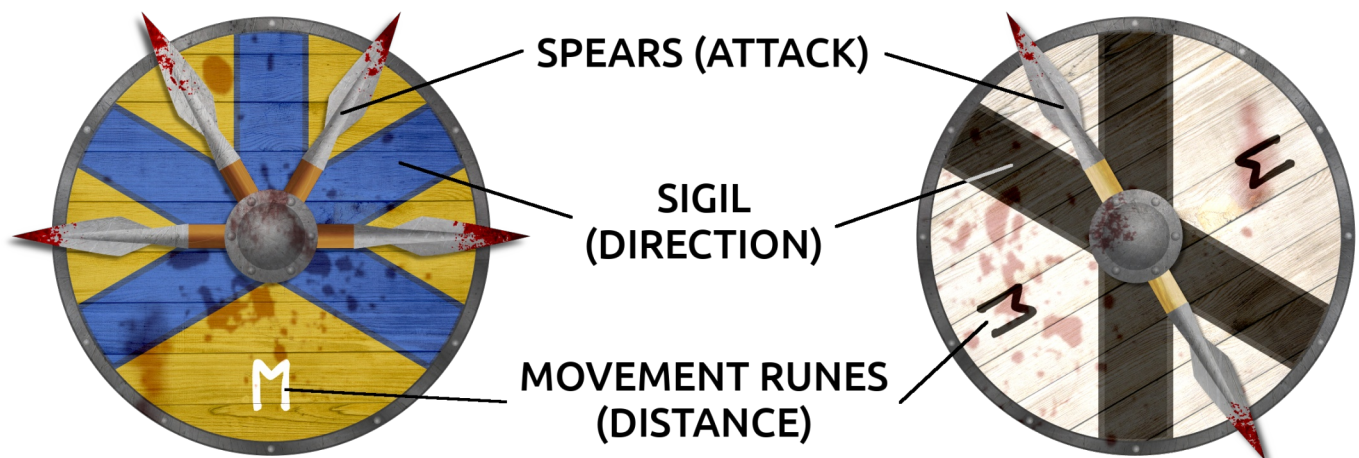
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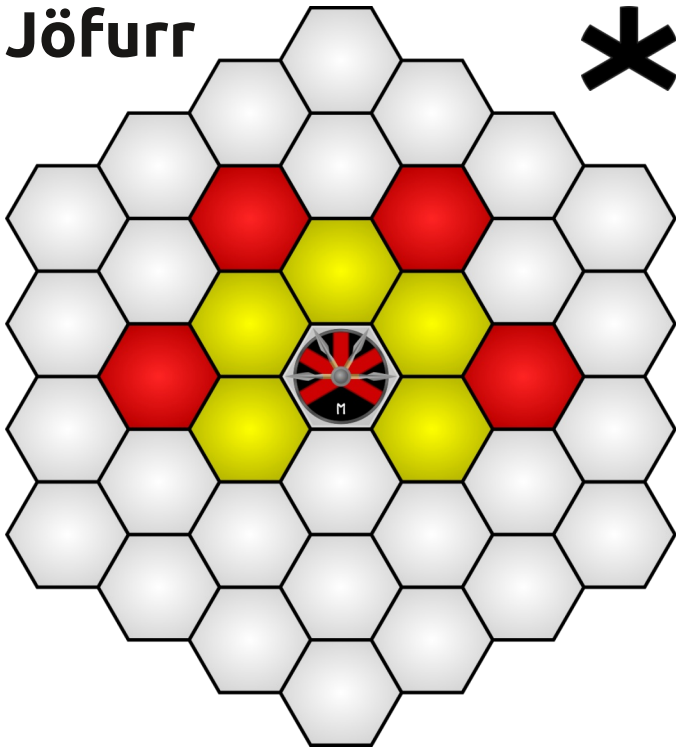
Resources

Visit www.NXSgame.com for more information.

The Anatomy of a Piece



Jöfurr



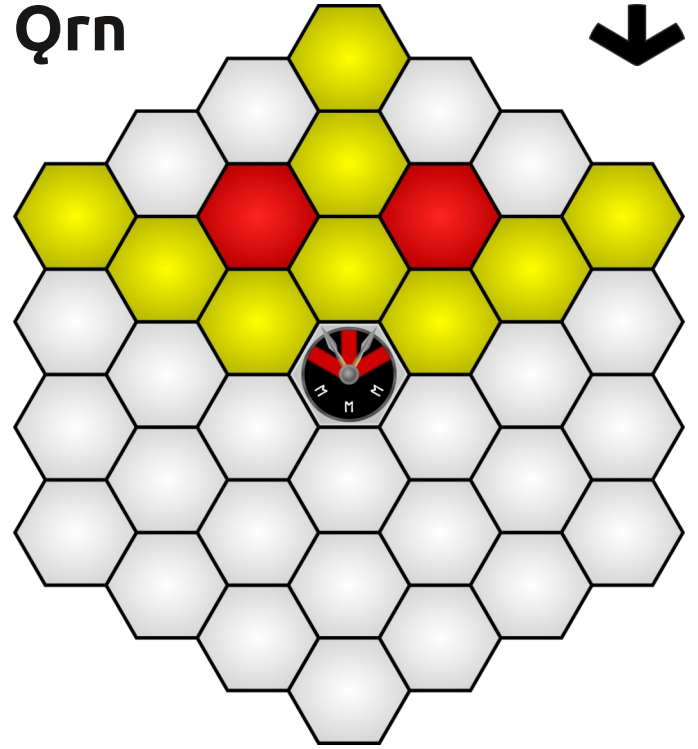
<<< The Boar Warrior

Slow moving but deadly; the Jöfurr has 5 movement directions (one space at a time), and 4 capture directions.

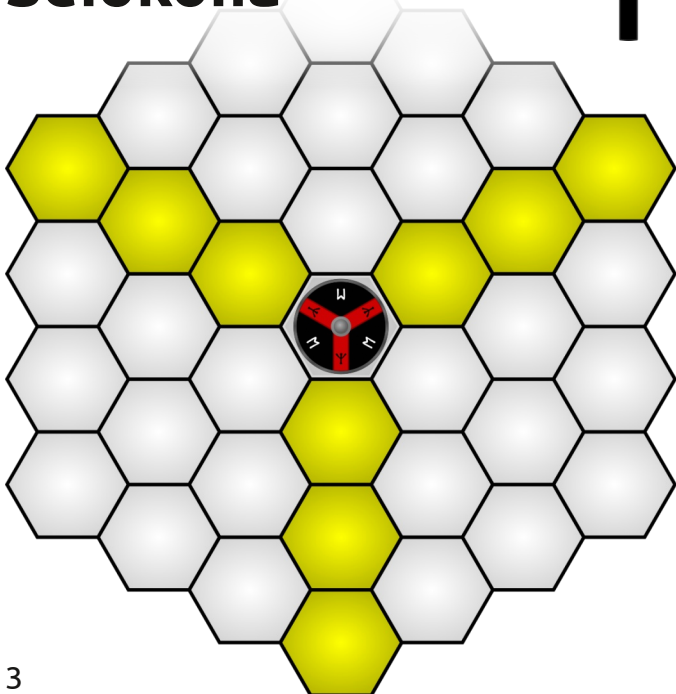
The Eagle Warrior >>>

Swift like the wind; the Qrn has 3 movement directions (up to three spaces at a time), and 2 capture directions.

Qrn



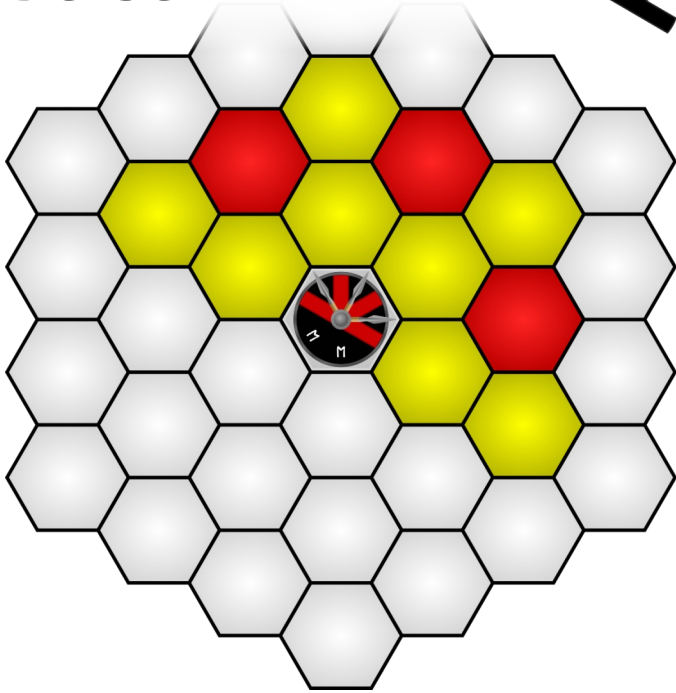
Seiðkona



<<< The Sorceress

Fast but unarmed; the Seiðkona has 3 movement directions (up to three spaces at a time). The Seiðkona cannot attack, but her powerful protective magic makes her impervious. She cannot be attacked.

Berserkr



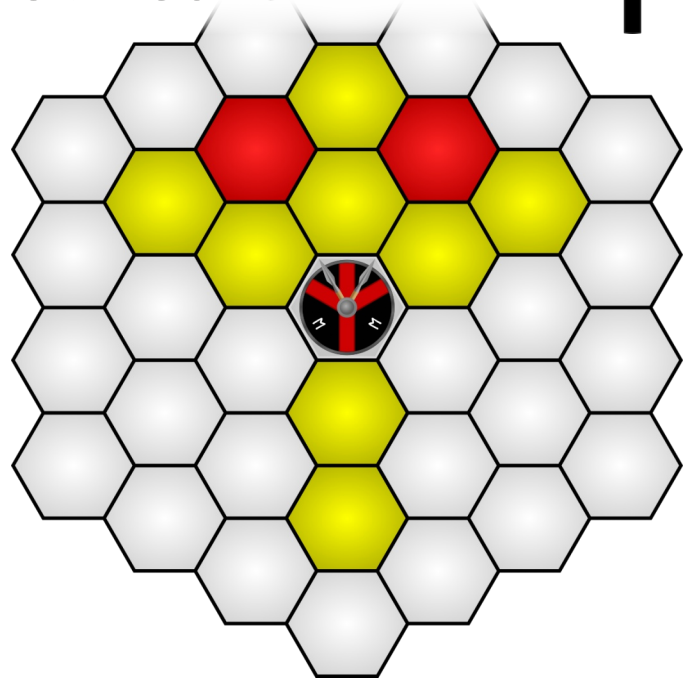
<<< The Bear Warrior

A well rounded and dangerous warrior; the Berserkr has 4 movement directions (up to two spaces at a time), and 3 capture directions.

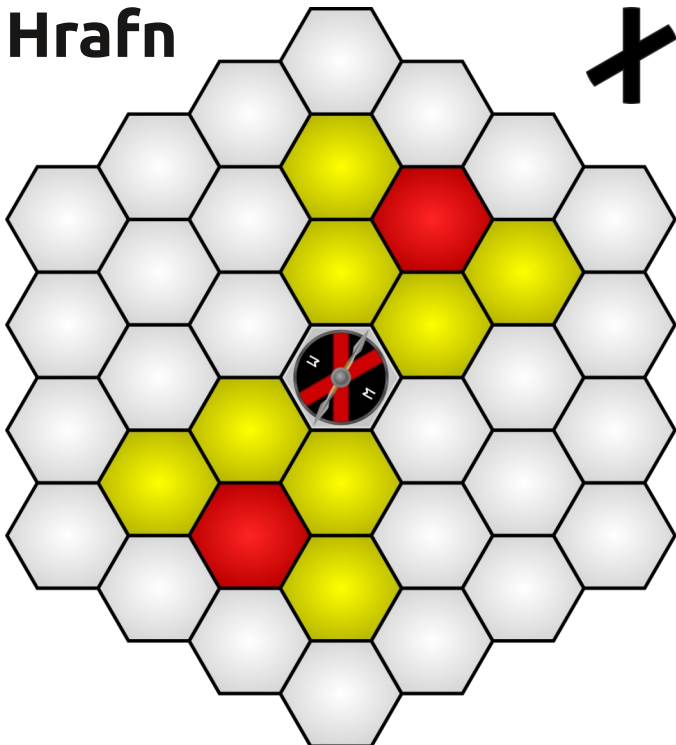
The Wolf Warrior >>>

Maneuverable and dangerous; the Úlfhéðnar has 4 movement directions (up to two spaces at a time), and 2 capture directions.

Úlfhéðnar



Hrafn



<<< The Raven Warrior

Slippery and sneaky; the Hrafn has 4 movement directions (up to two spaces at a time), and 2 capture directions.

BASICS

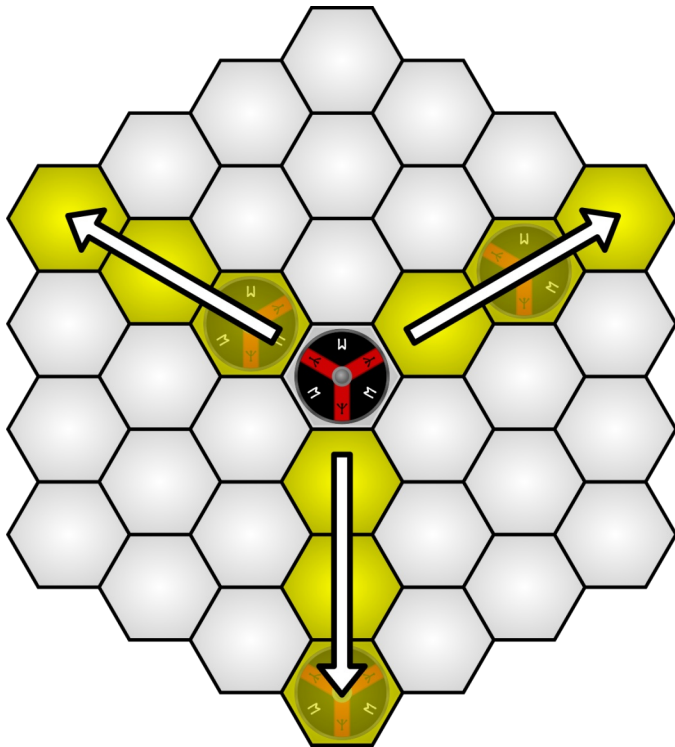
Moving

- Warriors can move towards their sigil's directional lines
- They can move as far as their number of movement runes

Warrior pieces are hexagonal (six sided). They are made up of sides with sigil lines and sides with movement runes (M).

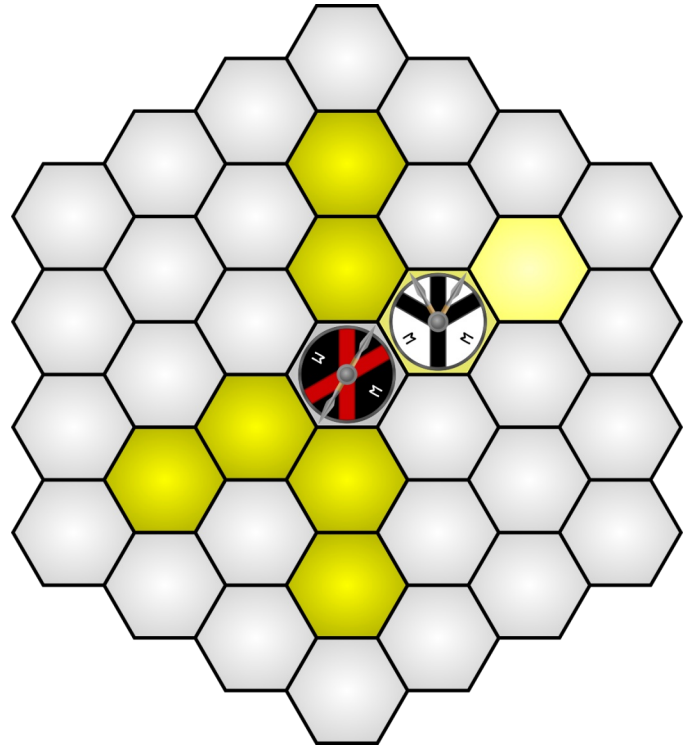
Pieces can move in the direction of their sigil lines. They can move as many spaces as they have movement runes. In the illustration below the piece shown can move in three directions, up to three spaces at a time. It could move into any of the yellow hexes.

**Note that pieces must maintain their original facing as they move. You cannot rotate a piece while moving.



- A piece cannot move through another piece

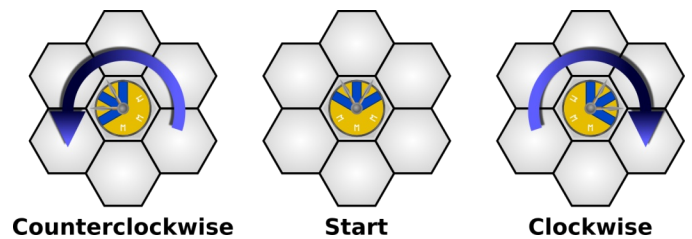
In the following illustration the black piece can move in four directions (four sigil lines), up to two spaces at a time (two movement runes). However, it cannot move through another piece. Since the white piece is in the way, the black piece is not able to move into the light yellow spaces.



Rotating

- Pieces can rotate one facing at a time

Pieces can make one 60° rotation clockwise or counterclockwise. End your rotation aligned with the board hex you are in.

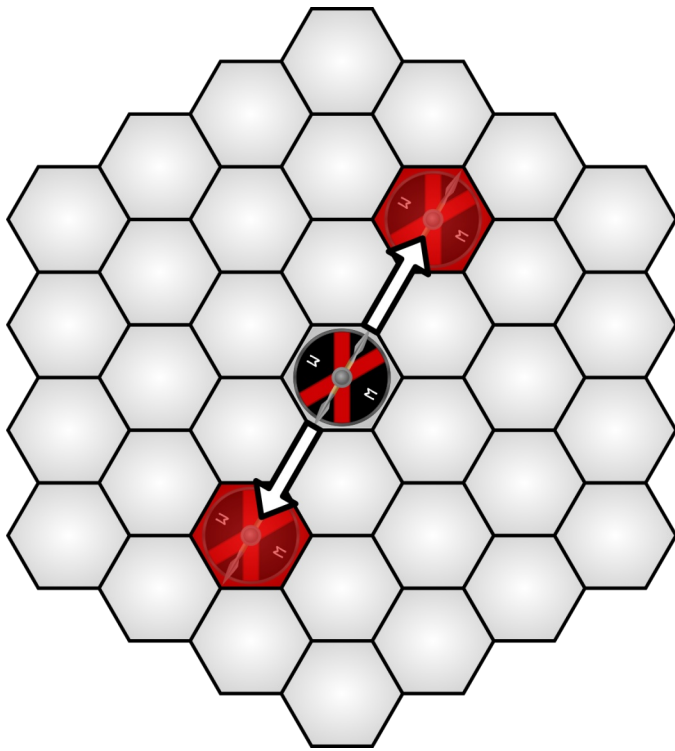


Attacking

- Pieces attack by making a diagonal jump in the direction of their spears

Pieces have spears whenever two sigil lines are adjacent. These spears indicate that the piece can attack in this direction.

Pieces attack in the direction of their spears by making a short diagonal jump. In the illustration below, the Black piece could capture an enemy piece in either red space. Captured enemy pieces are removed from the game. Your piece replaces the enemy piece. Do not rotate your piece while attacking.



- The Seiðkona (Sorceress) cannot be attacked

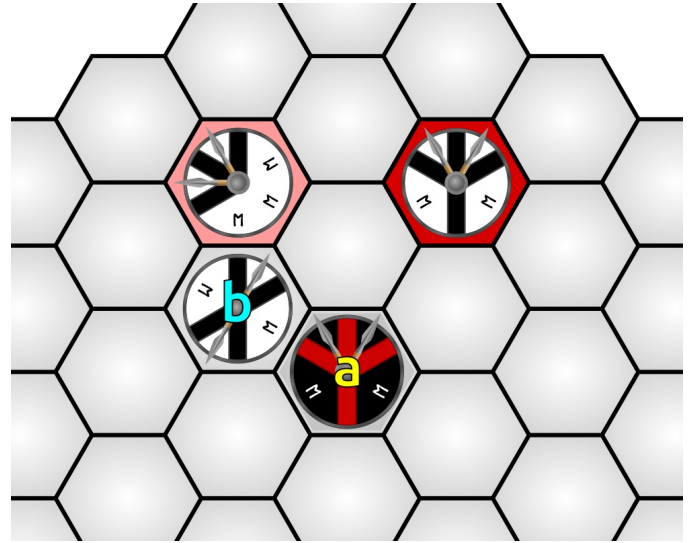
The Sorceress piece does not have any spears, therefore she cannot attack. However, she cannot be attacked. This piece is **invincible**. The Sorceress has additional rune markings as a reminder.



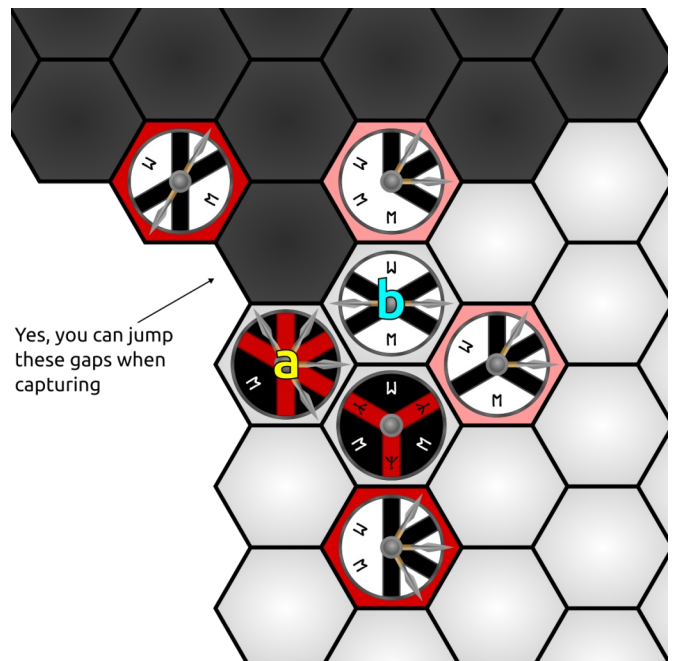
Blocking

- You cannot jump over an enemy piece when attacking

In the image below, the piece marked (a) can only attack the piece in the red hex. The piece in the pink hex is blocked from attack. That is because the piece marked (a) would have to jump over an enemy piece (b) in order to attack, and that is an illegal move.



While the diagram below is more complex, the situation is the same. Piece (a) cannot jump over piece (b) while attacking. It can only attack the pieces in the red hexes.



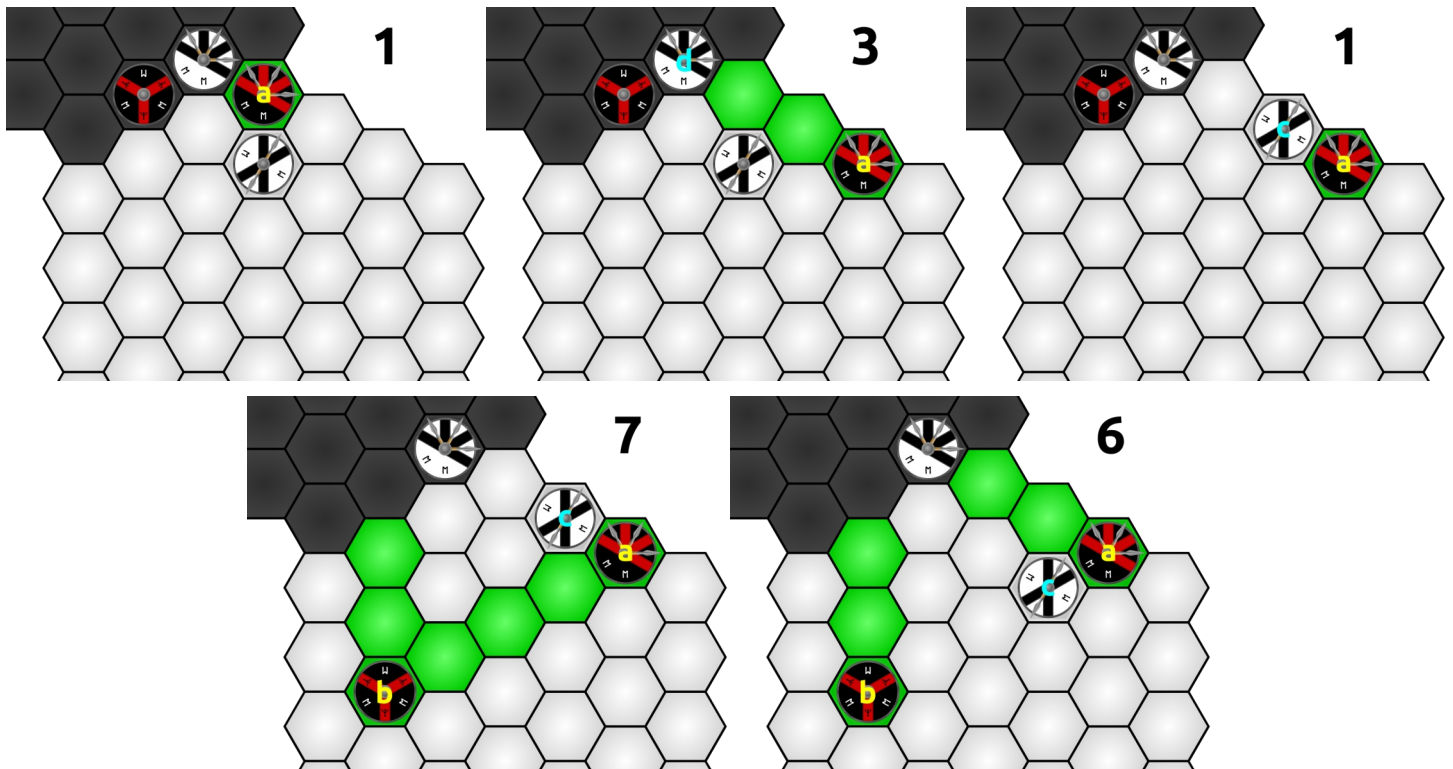
Territory

You win a game of NXS: Ragnarok by moving your pieces into your enemy's territory:

- Territory is captured by occupying an enemy hex,
 - by having an unbroken line between your piece in enemy territory and the edge of your territory,
 - or by having an unbroken line between two of your pieces in enemy territory.
-
- Captured spaces are only counted once per player

Consider the series of images below (note that we are ignoring the gold spaces since we are looking at a two player example). As Black moves her piece (a) into White territory, she captures White's spaces. In the first image she captures territory just by occupying a space, then in the second image by moving deeper into White's territory and gaining an uninterrupted line between her piece (a) and the edge of her board (captured spaces are marked in green). **Note that the piece marked (d) has no effect on territory capture as territory is calculated to the **edge** of the board. In the third image, White counters with piece (c); interrupting the line from (a) to Black's border. Black responds by moving another piece (b) into White's territory, gaining an unbroken line between her two pieces (a) & (b). Black also gains a line between (b) and the edge of her board. In the final image, White breaks the connection between (a) & (b) with the piece marked (c), but gives back the territory between (a) and the edge of Black's board. This reduces Black's captured territory from 7 to 6 spaces.

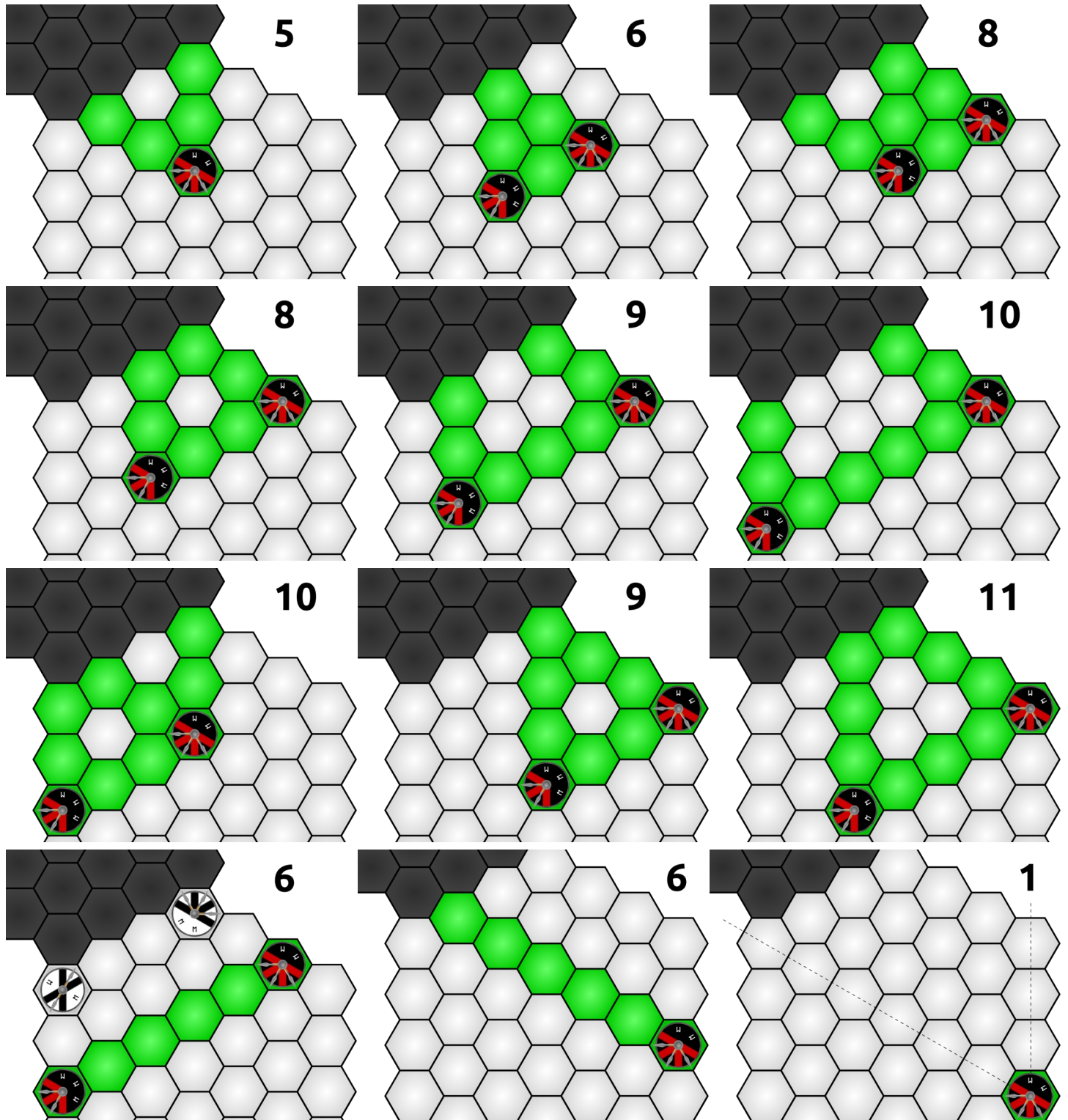
This back-and-forth continues until one player captures and holds enough territory to win the game (by default 10 spaces).



More About Territory

Understanding some basic patterns of territory capture will help you to quickly "see" how much territory that you have captured without having to count each space.

As you will see in the examples below, it is very possible to win the game by slipping just a few pieces across your opponent's border. Of course your opponent will be trying to do the same to you, so defend those front hexes!



Decisions

Before setting up, a few decisions need to be made

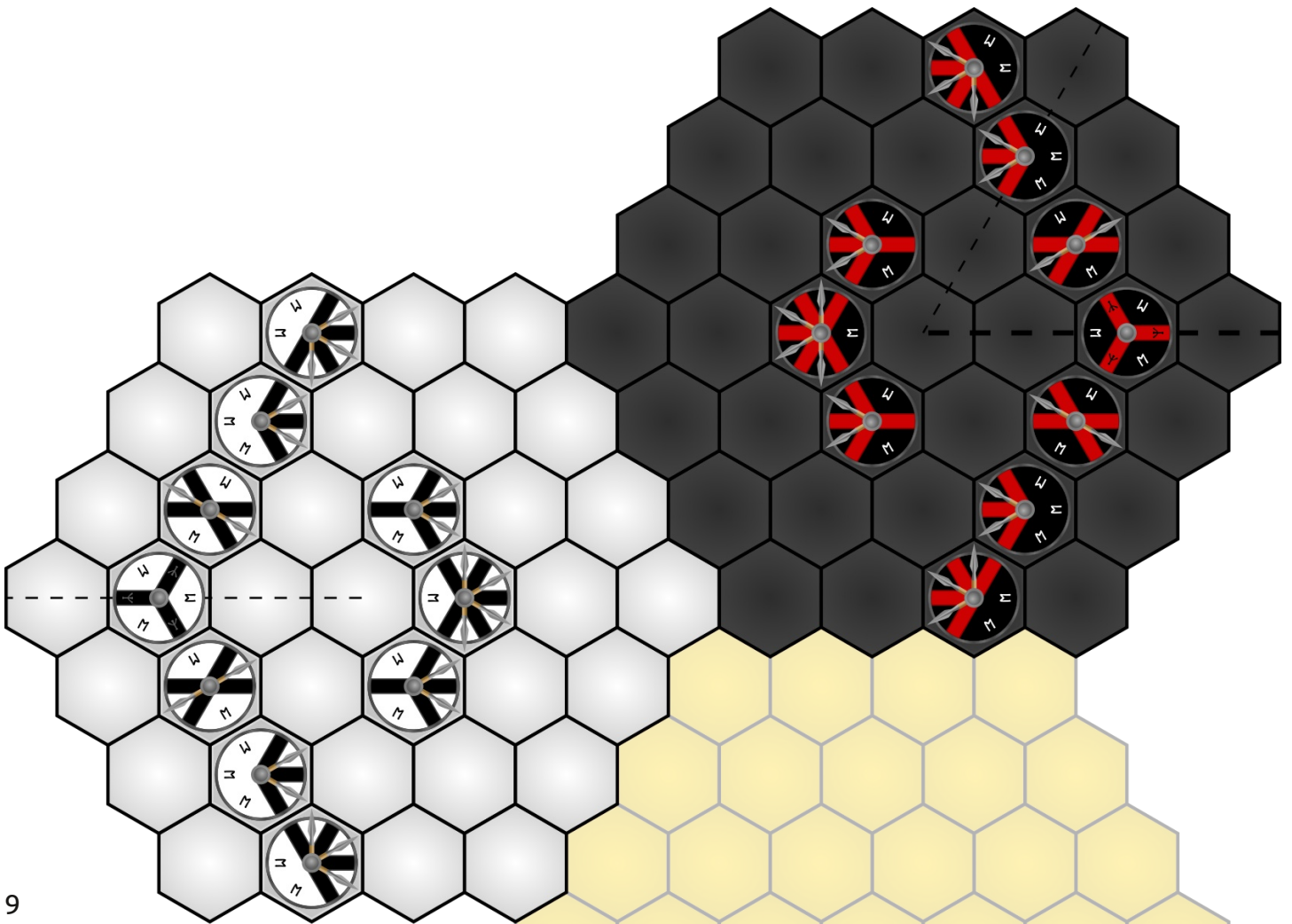
Who goes first? Traditionally White moves first, but players may use any method to decide the first player. Play progresses clockwise from the first player.

How many pieces are in your army? Typically, players choose from one of the standard setups (shown later), but random setup positions are also possible.

How much territory is required to win? The default is 10 spaces, but any reasonable amount could be used. Why not try 8 or 13 spaces? A more experienced player can even offer a handicap to a less experienced player (for example; the less experienced player might need 9 to win, while the more experienced player would need 10 or more).

Setting Up

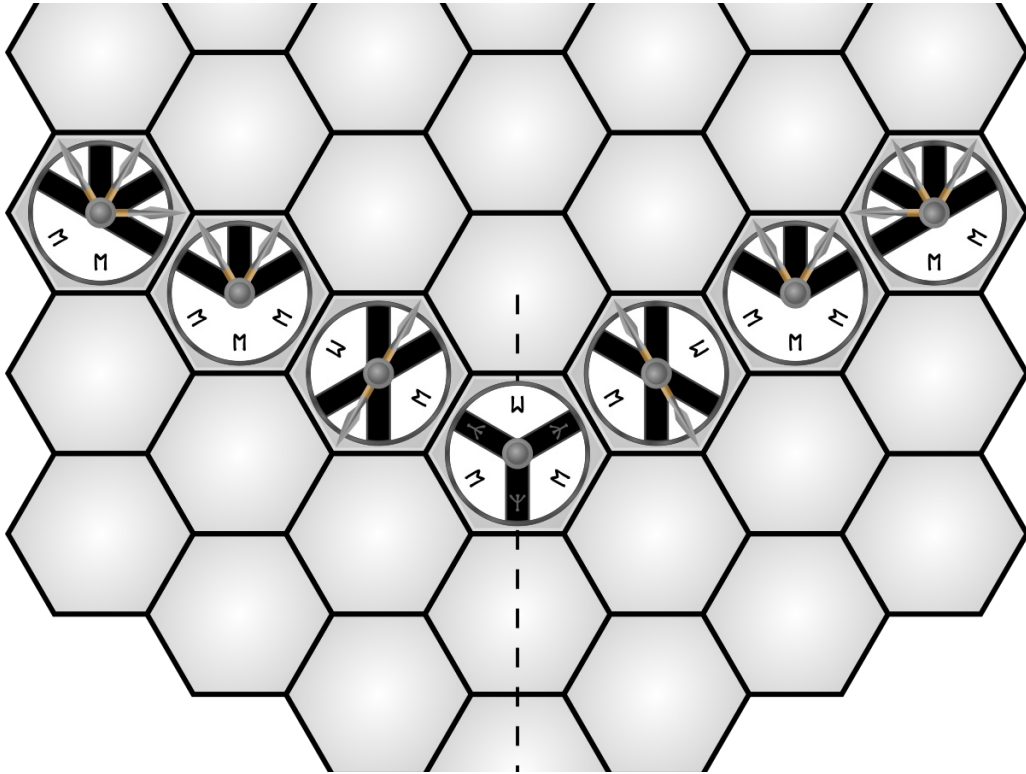
The image below shows you how to set up for a two-player game. Notice that the Black player has arranged their pieces using the **thick** centerline as a guide. White uses the thin (only) centerline as a guide. Black only uses their thin centerline for three-player games. In two-player games you ignore the gold spaces, treating them as off-board / out of play.



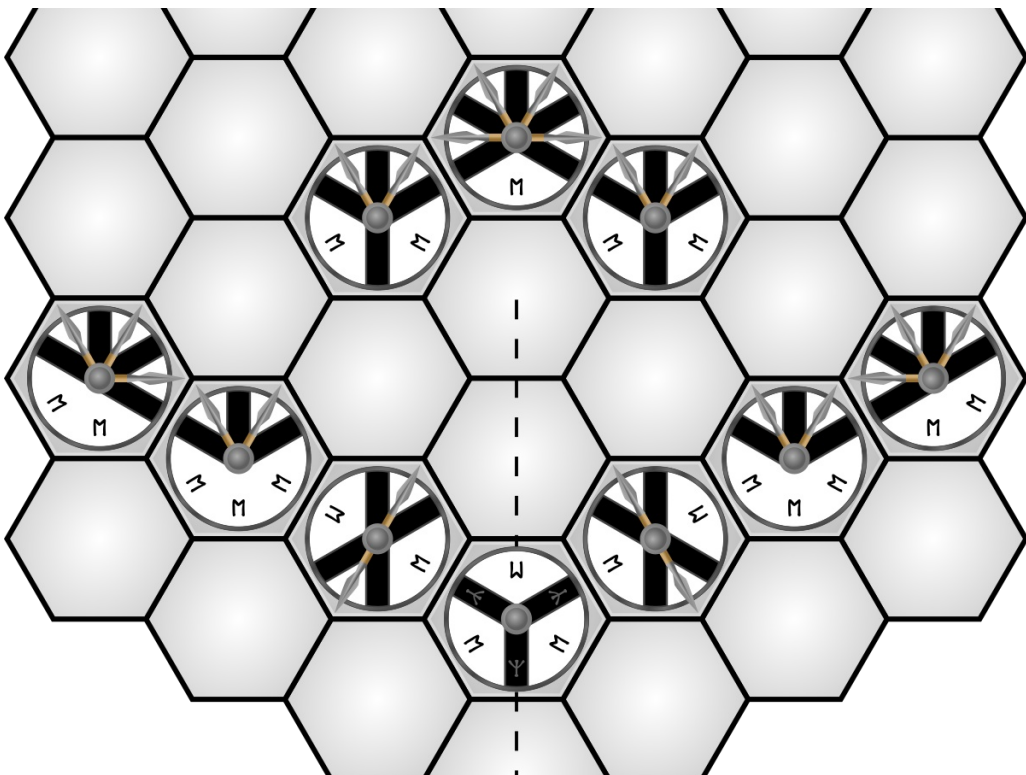
The Setups

These setups can be used in the two and three-player games. There are also alternate setups for three-player games (show later).

The image below demonstrates how to arrange the pieces for the standard **short game**.



The image below shows the standard setup for the **medium game**.



CARDS

Rune Power Cards add an exciting new dimension to the game of NXS: Ragnarok. Cast a rune power to give your warriors (or sorceress) an extra ability this turn.


The Basics

All of the standard rules of NXS: Ragnarok apply. Each card adds a new one-time-use ability that alters the basic rules for one piece this turn. Unless otherwise stated, the card's ability replaces your move this turn.

Here are three ways to play:

"Sannligr" – *Fair, in Old Norse*

For two players; to keep everything on an even keel.

Take the six cards marked with a  symbol in the upper left corner out of the deck. Shuffle them and randomly choose three. Give them to one player, and give the identical three cards from the rest of the deck to the other. Cards are left face up.

Players may use each card once during the game to add a new ability to their piece. The card is turned face down after use.

"The Drawing of the Three"

For two or three players; to mix it up.

Shuffle and deal three cards face up to each player. Players may use each card once during the game. It is turned face down after use.

This allows each player to have a different mix of special skills to start the game with.

To change things up even more; try four, five, or even six cards each. Even try dealing the cards face down for a secret element.

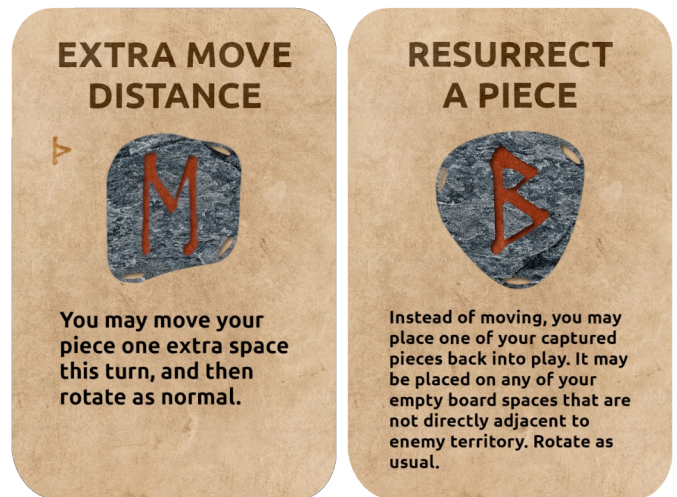
"Onitama sutairu" – *Onitama-style*

For two or three players; to keep the cards flowing.

Shuffle and deal two cards face up to each player. Deal one card face up in a neutral location.

When a player uses a card, they then replace it with the neutral card, and place their used card in the neutral area. The next player to use a card does the same.

In this way the cards keep flowing from player to player, and holding onto them can become a new strategic element of the game.

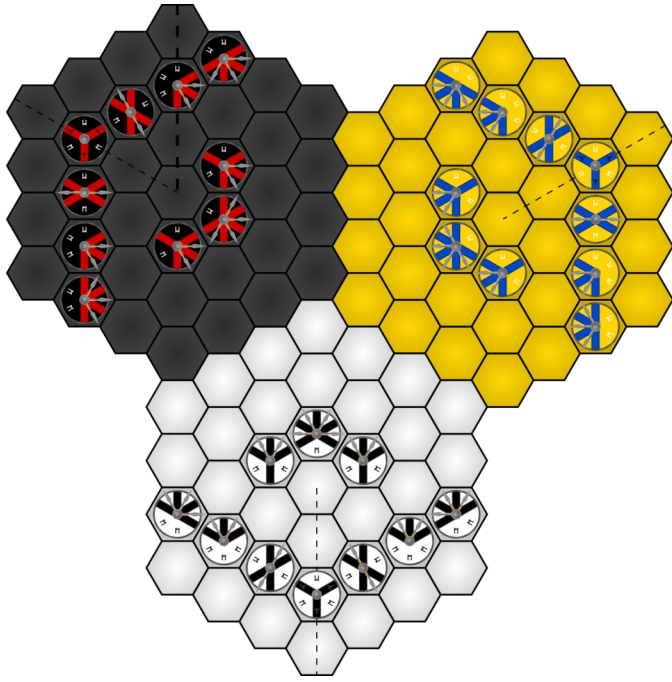


Example:

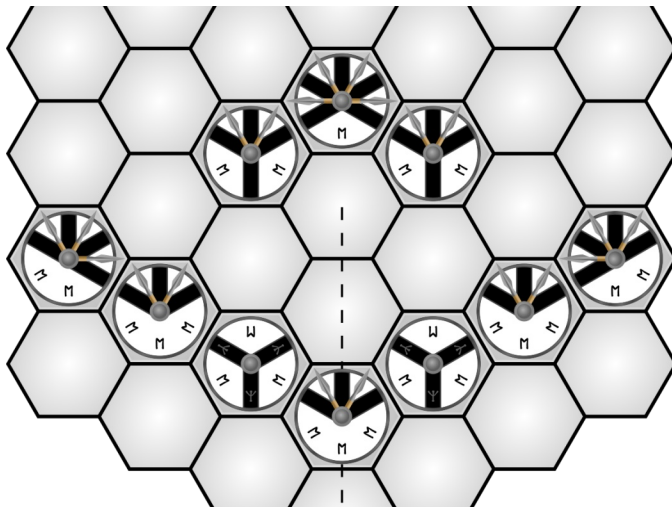
Players have chosen the Sannligr method to incorporate the Rune Power cards. Towards the end of the game, Player 1 uses the Extra Move Distance card (their last unplayed card). They move the Qrn warrior four spaces, instead of the normal maximum of three. This allows them to dive deeper into enemy territory and capture enough spaces to win the game.

THREE PLAYER

All three players arrange their pieces around the thin center line on their portion of the board. You can use either the short or medium game setups shown above, or one of the special three-player setups.

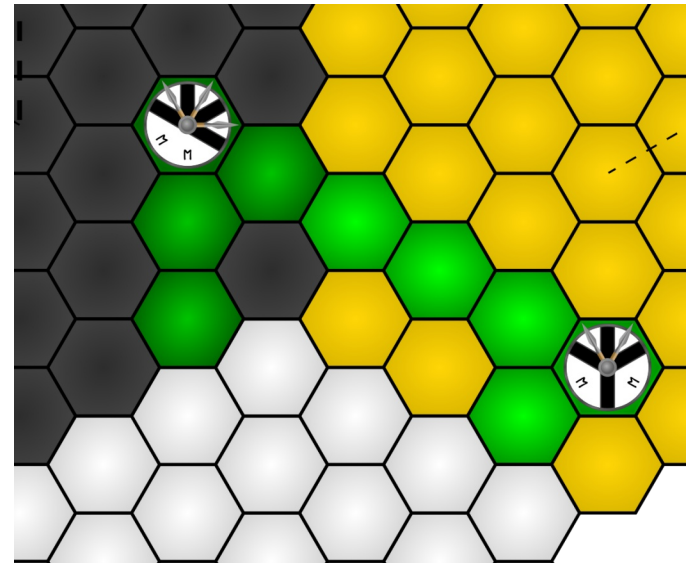


When using all three boards, you can use more Seiðkona pieces, like in the three-player medium game layout shown below.



Special rules for three player games:

- You must capture at least 1/3 of the needed territory from each enemy player. For example; if you are playing to 10, then you must get at least 4 of those spaces from each enemy.
- Two players can capture the same enemy space. For example; if both white and black have captured one of gold's spaces it will count towards both black's and white's total captured spaces.
- You can capture territory across multiple enemy boards. In this illustration, you can see that White has two pieces in enemy territory. White captures all of the uninterrupted spaces (marked in green) between White's pieces (and the spaces between White's pieces and the edge of White's board).



MORE

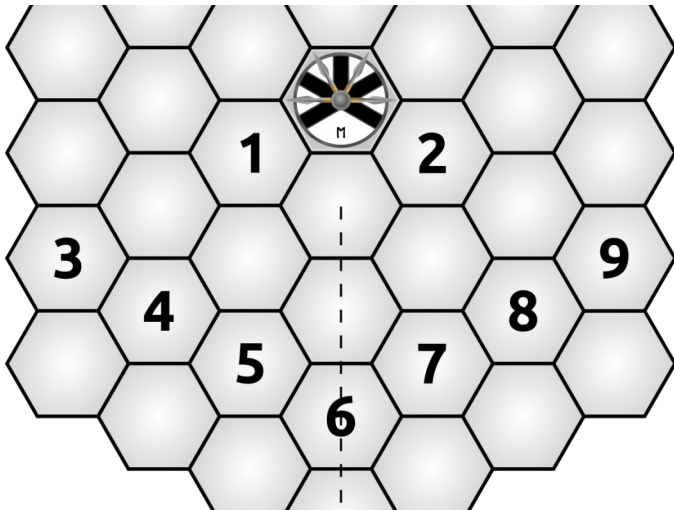
Random Setup



You can use the included piece selection tiles to randomly select the starting position of the pieces. Below is an example of setting up for a medium length game.

Place a Jöfurr piece as indicated (they are slow moving, so having them in front is best). If you are playing a two-player game, place all but two Seiðkona pieces face down (for three-players you use all the tiles) and shuffle them.

Randomly draw tiles, and place the corresponding piece on the board in the locations shown below. Your opponent(s) should either set up in an identical fashion, or randomly draw their own set if you want to mix things up.

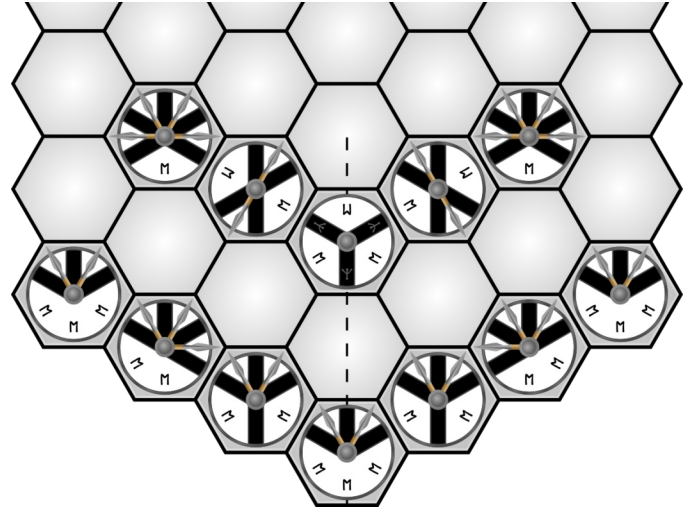


You can use the same technique to set up for shorter and longer games.

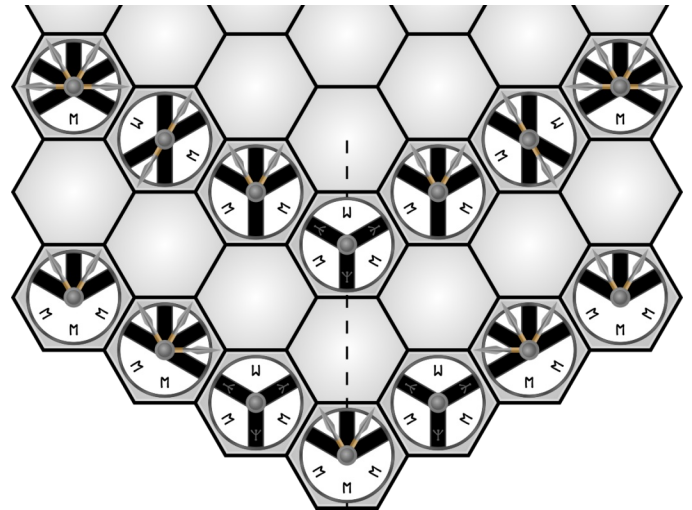
Other Setups

There are many starting positions in NXS: Ragnarok, depending on the length of game you want to play.

Two-Player: Long Game



Three-Player: Long Game



Many more available; scan the code below.



Variants

"Jötunn"

Jötunn is a two-player game, but players set up like a three-player game (using any board setup). The third "player" is the Jötunn (Giant), a hostile third party that you share control of.

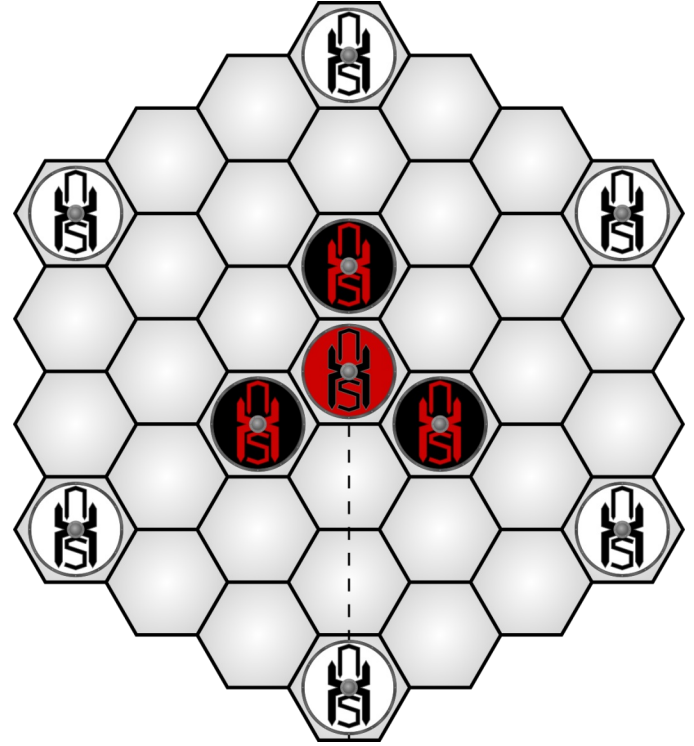
Special rules for Jötunn:

1. All special rules for three-player games apply (e.g. you must capture at least 1/3 of the needed territory from your opponent, and at least 1/3 from the Jötunn)
2. Jötunn are always considered enemy pieces. You cannot jump over them to capture. They block you from capturing territory if they are in the way.
3. Players take turns controlling the Jötunn. Assuming that Black and White are the two human players, and that Gold is the Jötunn:
 - White moves a white piece, then rotates a white piece
 - Black moves a black piece, then rotates a black piece
 - Black moves a gold piece, then rotates a gold piece
 - White moves a white piece, then rotates a white piece
 - White moves a gold piece, then rotates a gold piece
 - Continue alternating play (moving and rotating your pieces, and then the Jötunn) until someone has enough territory to win
4. You cannot move a Jötunn piece in a way that would put it (or another Jötunn piece) in danger of being captured.

heXentafl

Bonus Game!

heXentafl is a modern twist on the ancient Viking game Hnefatafl that can be played on a NXS: Ragnarok board.



Please scan the QR Code below for a link to the rules, or visit nxsgame.com/hexentafl.html



NXS: RAGNAROK



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