

Culture Wars 2-4 players

Components needed: 1 basic piecepack set and 36 tokens per player

Setup

- The pawns and dice may be set aside; they won't be used in the game.
- Place all tiles grid side up in a 5 x 5 square with a hole in the middle.
- Set up the pieces for each player. The tokens represent the population of the culture. The **Null** coin will be used to determine player order throughout the game. The remaining numbered coins will represent locations of special interest (abundant resources, especially fertile land, etc) and eventually settlements. The **Ace** coin remains in the player's reserve and its use will be explained later.
- Each player takes the coins for one suit.
- Collect each player's **Null** coins together (suit side down) and mix.
- Each player turns their **Ace** coin suit side down in front of them.
- Each player sets their remaining coins suit side up in front of them and mixes them.

Map Setup

- Turn over each **Null** coin in turn to reveal the turn order for the remaining steps of the setup.
- The first player takes any tile adjacent to the hole and moves it adjacent to any other tile(s) so that the grids align.
- Each remaining player does likewise. In a two-player game, repeat this one more time for each player so that four tiles get moved. This may result in the inner sea and outer sea becoming connected. It may also result in an island being created. These conditions are acceptable.
- Next, in the reverse player order, each player takes turns placing one of their coins (suit side up) on the board within a grid square such that there are at least two empty spaces in all directions between any other coin. They may be placed on an edge or corner of the board (a coast).
- After all coins that can be placed, have been placed, any unplaced coins remain in the player's reserve (suit side up). Turn over all coins on the map suit side down.
- Next, (continuing in reverse order) each player places two tokens on the board. *Possible handicapping rule, give a less experienced player one extra token to start.*
- Finally, turn all **Null** coins suit side down and mix.

Game Play

1. Determine player order.
2. Population expansion -- In player order, each player expands their population.
3. Population movement -- In reverse player order, each player moves their population.
4. Resolve any cultural conflicts.
5. Form any viable settlements.
6. Remove excess population.
7. Abandon unsupported settlements.
8. Reset Null coins and mix.

Ad 1. Determine Player Order

As in the setup phase of the game, the **Null** coins are turned over one at a time to reveal the player order.

Ad 2. Population Expansion

In any square where a player has one or more tokens, place another token. Each player's overall population is limited by the number of tokens available. This represents the cultural cohesion of the player's population.

Ad 3. Population Movement

Population may move orthogonally (left, right, up or down), not diagonally. Units move one space. Units adjacent to a friendly coastal settlement may move (by virtual boat) to a coastal square adjacent to another settlement (even an opponent's settlement) on the same sea.

There is no direct stacking limit, (see *Removing Excess Population* below). Players may move their tokens into spaces occupied by other players.

Possible variants to test:

- allow diagonal movement,
- allow units to move two spaces,
- allow a unit entering one of their settlements may move to any square (even diagonally) adjacent to that settlement
- allow boats to land on any coastal space on the same sea.

Ad 4. Cultural Conflict

As the scope of the game is generational (each turn represents one or more generations), conflict may represent war, or a philosophical exchange of political ideals. Tokens of opposing players that exceed the population limit of the square they are in (see *Removing Excess Population* below) are in conflict with each other over the resources available in that space. Tokens entering an opponent's settlement are in conflict with that settlement. Any number of players may be involved in a conflict over a single square. Resolve conflicts between **tokens only** before resolving conflicts involving settlements.

Resolving Conflicts Between Tokens Only

Beginning with the player with the fewest tokens in the square, alternately remove one token of each player until the square can support all remaining tokens. In the case of equal numbers of tokens between players, remove those players' tokens simultaneously.

Optional Rule: Technological Advantage -- A player with a greater number of settlements has a technological advantage over other player(s) with fewer settlements. In this case, the technologically inferior player(s) removes tokens before the technologically advantaged do, even when outnumbering the more advanced player. This rule will shorten the game somewhat.

Resolving Conflicts Between Units and Settlements

Resolve all conflicts between tokens before proceeding to conflicts with settlements.

1. Turn the settlement coin suit side down. If this reveals an Ace, remove the coin from the map and hand it to the owning player.
2. Place five of the settlement player's tokens in the square. If using the optional Technological Advantage rule, this square still counts as a settlement. If there are not enough tokens in reserve to place in defense of the settlement, place as many as are available.
3. Proceed as above in Resolving Conflicts Between **Tokens Only**.

Ad 5. Form Settlements

There are two ways to establish a settlement. A player may stack ten of their tokens in a square and build a settlement by replacing the tokens with their Ace coin (suit side up).

Or, in any square with a coin that a player has five or more tokens, remove the tokens and turn the coin suit side up. If the suit is not the player's then hand the coin to the owning player and place one of the player's coins from his reserve, even if it's the Ace. If he has no coins in reserve, he cannot build a settlement in that square. The coin is still removed, representing the depletion of the resources or looting and desecration of the cultural site.

Ad 6. Remove Excess Population

Each square with a coin suit side down can support as many tokens as the number shown. Each empty square can support two tokens. Settlements simply absorb all excess population, effectively supporting zero tokens. Remove any tokens in excess of what the square can support.

Ad 7. Abandon Unsupported Settlements

Each settlement requires five friendly tokens (farmers and external industry) to remain adjacent (including diagonally) to it. If there are not enough adjacent tokens, turn the settlement suit side down and place that number of tokens in the square. If the Ace is revealed, remove the coin and place one token in the square.

Ad 8. Reset Null Coins

Turn all **Null** coins suit side down and mix.

Winning the Game

In a three- or four-player game, the first player to hold three settlements for a full turn wins. In a two-player game, four settlements is a win.

Credits

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