



Masters secretly train Students to become martial arts lineage holders while an ambitious new Emperor tries to unify his people under one banner. Deeply rooted in Chinese philosophy, this game carries with it the concepts of yin and yang, the four seasons, chi (energy), and the eight directions.

Player interaction coupled with the ever-changing circumstances of the board make for a complex strategy game that requires players to develop a sixth sense for taking the right action at the right time.

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Justin Waggle, justin@graywolfgames.org

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GAME OBJECTIVES

1. Players controlling a Master must train a Student, maintain a Lineage, and move two player pieces to the center of the board.
2. The player controlling the Emperor and the General must place markers in the four corners of the board.

HOW TO SET UP THE BOARD

1. Place the Center tile equal distance from all players. Place one (1) Spring Forests tile, one (1) Summer Mountains tile, one (1) Autumn Marshes tile and one (1) Winter Lakes tile around it (see diagram).
2. Randomize the remaining octagonal tiles and complete two concentric rings around the Center tile (Fields side facing down).
3. Place the four (4) Directional tiles (N, S, E, W) around the Center tile like a compass.
4. Place the two (2) Yin Yang tiles (black side up directly above the North tile and white side up directly below the South tile).
5. Place one (1) Wood Town, one (1) Fire Town, one (1) Metal Town and one (1) Water Town in the four corners of the board with the color side facing up (see diagram).
6. Randomize the remaining thirty (30) square tiles and use them to fill in the board. The color side of these remaining square tiles must be kept hidden at all times during this part of game setup. Temples may not be placed next to other Temples adjoining the same octagonal tile. The same rule applies to Palaces.
7. Flip over all Temples (triangles).
8. Shuffle the Animal cards and place them in separate sequential decks and then flip through each deck until the specified animal is on the top (1 - Snake, 2 - Dragon, 3 - Tiger, 4 - Leopard, 5 - Crane).
9. Shuffle and set out the Town, Temple and Palace cards. Flip the first card on each deck. Temple cards must be ordered by the seasons (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter) for the remainder of the game.

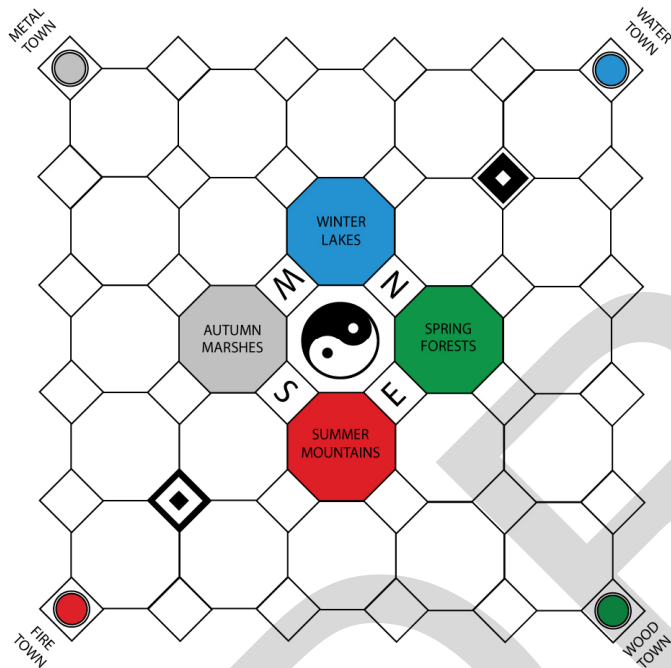
STARTING THE GAME

1. Each player rolls a die and the player with the highest number chooses a pair of player pieces. Continue choosing in a clockwise direction. If the Emperor and the General have not yet been chosen, the last player to choose must play the Emperor and the General.
2. White Student [-] player pieces start in the Center tile with the side displaying color facing down. Black Master [+] player pieces start on the matching Temple with the side displaying color facing up.

3. The Emperor [o] starts on the White Yin Yang Tile, the General [+] starts on the Black Yin Yang Tile.
4. The player to the left of the Emperor and the General starts as the First Player. The order of play moves in a clockwise direction.
5. The player controlling the Emperor and the General must now overturn and block five (5) octagonal tiles (any tile except the Center Tile). No temple may be completely blocked during the initial setup.

IMPORTANT NOTE!!!

This game plays best with three or more players. If you want to play with two players, see Rules For Two-Player Games



SEQUENCE OF PLAY

1. Movement
 - a. Resolve PUSH and PULL attempts
 - b. Flip Town, Palace, and Temple Cards
 - c. Animal Cards / Lineage Markers / Conscript Students
 - d. Collect Chi
2. Overturn Terrain and Block Fields (Emperor)
3. Block Towns (General and Conscripted Students)
4. Bid chi for First Player (Every Winter)

MOVEMENT

Player pieces MUST move to a new space on the board each turn and may NOT retrace their steps. Each player piece may make up to three (3) movements per turn.

- Contemporaries may NOT move past each other.
- Masters and Students may move past each other and may end the Movement phase on the same space.
- Students with Five Animal Cards are considered White Masters and the contemporaries of all other Masters.
- Conscripted Students may move into the same space as the General but they may NOT move into the same space as Masters.
- No player piece (with the exception of a Conscripted Student) may move into the same space as the General. However, the General may move into the same space as any Student.
- No player piece may move into the same space as the Emperor. The Emperor may NOT move into a space with any other player piece.

THE CENTER TILE

All player pieces may move OUT OF the Center tile but only players with Five Animal Cards and their Native Lineage may move their player pieces INTO the Center tile.

If all exits OUT OF the Center tile are blocked by Black Chi (or a combination of player pieces, Seasons and Black Chi), a player may pick up a piece of Black Chi on one (1) adjacent octagonal tile of their choosing in order to leave the Center tile. If Black Chi is NOT involved in blocking all exits from the Center Tile, the player piece in question should be considered blocked this turn.

Players with Five Animal Cards and their Native Lineage may move player pieces into the Center tile and are NOT required to move them out unless the winning conditions are no longer satisfied.

Player pieces in the Center tile that aren't required to move may pick up a piece of Black Chi on one (1) adjacent octagonal tile if they CHOOSE to move OUT OF the Center tile and would not be able to otherwise.

COMPASS TILES

No player pieces may pass over the Compass tiles.

OCTAGONAL TILES

Spring Forests: Blocked to all players during the Spring.

Summer Mountains: Blocked to all players during the Summer.

Autumn Marshes: Blocked to all players during the Autumn.

Winter Lakes: Blocked to all players during the Winter.

Fields: This is the only tile that the General can move on. Players can move on this tile during any season.

TEMPLES, TOWNS, AND PALACES

Temples (Triangles), Towns (Circles), and Palaces (Squares) have different types of Chi that remain hidden until a player piece ends a turn on that space. Occupied square tiles must be flipped over to reveal the type of Chi native to that location. Players may collect one (1) Chi (Glass Token) of the appropriate type for each player piece that ends the Movement Round on a square tile.

In addition, each type of square tile has a corresponding deck of cards.

- Town Cards indicate the type of Chi that is currently available for use to all players. This deck changes every time player pieces end a turn on a Town.
- Palace Cards may be used to change one (1) Terrain in a specified direction as the card is flipped. The color on each card indicates the next Influential Palace. Players that end a turn on an Influential Palace may change two (2) Terrains using the next card flipped or one (1) Terrain on each of the next two cards flipped.
- Temple Cards indicate the change of seasons and show the Terrain types that are currently blocked to all players. This deck changes every time player pieces end a turn on a Temple. Masters visiting a Temple that contains their native Lineage Marker obtain that marker and the corresponding Lineage Card.

YIN YANG TILES

Each time a Yin Yang tile transitions from occupied to unoccupied, the Yin Yang tile must be flipped over. Players do not receive Chi for ending a turn on this space. Different combinations of the Yin Yang tiles determine which player piece to move:

Black & White: Players may choose which player piece to move.

White & White: Students, White Masters and the Emperor must move.

Black & Black: Black Masters and the General must move.

THE POWER OF CHI

The following rules govern the use of Chi:

- Players can use Chi corresponding to the Town Card in play.
- Each piece of Chi provides one (1) additional movement.
- Players can use any type of Chi when bidding on First Player.
- Alchemy allows players to convert Chi.
- Players may use Chi to PUSH or PULL
- Players may use Chi to reclaim Towns and Fields

BIDDING CHI FOR THE FIRST PLAYER POSITION

Players may bid on the First Player position each Winter by spending an undisclosed amount of Chi (Glass Tokens). The player that bids the most Chi chooses the First Player. The current First Player decides the outcome of all ties.

ALCHEMY

Players may convert two (2) chi of the same color for one chi of any other color at the beginning of each turn. This process has no upper limit.

RECLAIMING TOWNS AND FIELDS

Players controlling a Master and Student pair may move into a blocked Town or Field and remove a piece of Black Chi at any time during the Movement phase by spending five (5) Chi of the current type showing. Players may combine Chi with other players directly adjacent to the Town or Field to be reclaimed.

PUSHING AND PULLING

Masters and the General may attempt to PUSH and Students may attempt to PULL player pieces by spending five (5) pieces of Chi.

- Players may not PUSH other player pieces into ineligible spaces.
- Masters and the General must move into the same space as another player piece to make an attempt to PUSH.
- If more than one Master is present on a space, five (5) pieces of chi must be used to PUSH each Master.

Players may spend five (5) pieces of Chi to stand their ground on a PULL or repel a PUSH.

- Player pieces repelling a PUSH must choose a valid adjoining space to repel the initiator. Repelling a PUSH attempt ends the turn.

ANIMAL CARDS

Students may earn Animal Cards based on the animal form showing on the top of each deck. For example: If a Snake Animal Card is showing on the top of the first deck, the first Student to end their turn on the same space as the Snake Master can earn that Animal Card. As each Student earns an Animal Card, they may move on to encounter the training Master shown on the top of the next deck.

If a Student ends the Movement Phase on a space shared with the appropriate training Master for this Student, the Master **MUST** teach them. Students can earn multiple Animal Cards at one time if the cards showing in the decks align that way but they may not take more than one card from each deck (as indicated by the number shown on each card).

Students may earn Animal Cards from any Master (even if the player controlling the Student to be trained also controls the training Master).

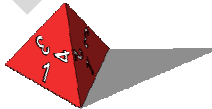
If a Black Master has temporarily lost their Lineage Marker, Students must journey to the corresponding Temple (where the lost Lineage Marker is placed) to receive training.

When a Player obtains five (5) Animal Cards, the corresponding Student player piece is flipped over so the side displaying color is facing up. This Student is now considered a White Master.

LINEAGE CARDS AND MARKERS

At the end of every turn, players that have moved a Master or the General player piece may roll one (1) 4-sided die (Lineage Marker) to gain Chi (Glass Tokens) equal to the number showing on the die after the roll. Masters receive chi matching the color of the die, the General receives chi matching the top card on the Town deck.

Lineage Cards and Markers may not be taken from their rightful owners. They may only be lost if a Black Master is blocked and sent to the Center Tile. A lost Lineage Marker must be placed on the Temple of its origin until it is retrieved.



THE WAY IS BLOCKED

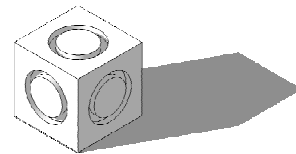
If a **Student** cannot move to a new space at the beginning of a Movement round, the Student immediately moves to the Center tile and forfeits the rest of this turn. The player controlling this Student must redistribute their highest level Animal Card into the appropriate deck. If a Student was considered a **White Master** before losing their highest level Animal Card, the player piece must relinquish the title of Master and start the next turn as a Student.

If a **Black Master** cannot move to a new space at the beginning of a Movement round, the Master immediately moves to the Center tile and forfeits the rest of this turn. Lineage Cards and Lineage Markers currently in the Master's possession must be returned to the corresponding Temples. No other player may claim this lineage but the space may be blocked by other player pieces.

If the **General** cannot move to a new space at the beginning of a Movement round, the General immediately moves to the the Center tile and forfeits the rest of this turn. The current First Player must select a blocked Town or Field and release it from the General's control.

If a **Conscripted Student** cannot move to a new space at the beginning of a Movement round, the Conscripted Student immediately moves to the Center tile and forfeits the rest of this turn. Control of this Student is immediately returned to the original player.

If the **Emperor** cannot move to a new space at the beginning of a Movement round, the Emperor immediately moves to the Center tile and forfeits the rest of this turn. The current First Player must select a blocked Town or Field and release it from the General's control.



STATIONARY MASTERS

When there are Masters that aren't controlled by one of the players, those Masters stay on their corresponding temples and act as stationary Masters. These Masters do not move and effectively block the space from their contemporaries but Students may visit these Masters to receive training.

THE EMPEROR

The Emperor can move on any unoccupied space on the board (subject to the Seasons). With each movement, the Emperor may flip underlying Terrain to the Fields side.

If the Emperor ends the Movement round on an unoccupied octagonal tile, he may choose to flip the Terrain to the Fields side and place a piece of Black Chi on it to block the space.

THE GENERAL

The General can only move on the Fields. If the General ends the Movement round on an unoccupied Town, he may choose to place a piece of Black Chi on it to block the space. Just as the Emperor flips Terrains, the General converts Towns and conscripts Students.

CONSCRIPTED STUDENTS

If the General shares a space with a Student at the end of the Movement phase, that Student immediately moves to the Center Tile, redistributes their highest level Animal Card into the appropriate deck, and becomes a Conscripted Student. Conscripted Student player pieces must be flipped on their side. These Conscripted Students now take orders directly from the Emperor.

Conscripted Students must move at the same time as the Emperor. Move the Emperor player piece and any Conscripted Student player piece (multiple player pieces) on the same turn. After moving and/or performing actions for the Emperor, Conscripted Students immediately return to the Center Tile and control of each Student is returned to the original player.

BLOCKING TOWNS AND FIELDS

If the General or a Conscripted Student ends a turn on a Town (circle space), a piece of Black Chi (Glass Token) may be placed on that Town in order to block it.

If the Emperor ends a turn on a valid Terrain, the Terrain may be flipped to the Fields side and a piece of Black Chi (Glass Token) may be placed on that Field in order to block it. The Emperor may NOT block Towns and the General and Conscripted Students may NOT block Fields.

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Once a piece of Black Chi is placed on a Town or a Field, it is considered a blocked space to all player pieces except the General, the Emperor, and Conscripted Students until the Black Chi is removed.

Black Chi may only be removed by blocking the General or the Emperor or spending five (5) Chi of the current type showing on the Town deck.

The player controlling the Emperor and the General may pick up a piece of Black Chi from any Town or Field and redistribute it in order to convert another space if the player has run out of Black Chi.

WINNING CONDITIONS

If a player guides a Black Master with a Lineage Marker and a Student with Five Animal Cards (White Master) to the Center tile, the game is over and this player has won.

If the player controlling the Emperor guides the General to convert Towns in the four corners of the board, the game is over and this player has won.

RULES FOR TWO-PLAYER GAMES

Flip the Center Tile to the side with the Yin Yang symbol to indicate a two-player game.

The Emperor and the General may not be played in a two-player game.

Palace Cards (Square Cards) have a different purpose in a two-player game. Rather than serving to flip Terrain, these cards are used to place a piece of Black Chi on unoccupied octagonal tiles in the direction indicated on each card.

The color on the currently displayed Palace Card indicates the next Influential Palace. An Influential Palace allows a player to place two pieces of Black Chi (instead of just one). Players on Influential Palaces may place two (2) pieces of Black Chi using the next card flipped or one (1) piece of Black Chi on each of the next two cards flipped.

If all of the Black Chi has been used, players may redistribute a piece of Black Chi that has already been placed onto a new space in order to block it.

GAME PIECES

5 Student [-] Pieces (1 Fire, 1 Earth, 1 Metal, 1 Water, 1 Wood)

5 Master [+] Pieces (1 Snake, 1 Dragon, 1 Tiger, 1 Leopard, 1 Crane)

1 Emperor [o] Piece

1 General [+] Piece

25 Octagonal Tiles (Double-sided)

- 1 Center Tile
- 6 Summer Mountains Tiles (Fields Tiles on reverse)
- 6 Winter Lakes Tiles (Fields Tiles on reverse)
- 6 Spring Forests Tiles (Fields Tiles on reverse)
- 6 Autumn Marshes Tiles (Fields Tiles on reverse)

36 Square Tiles (Double-sided)

- 4 Directional Tiles (N, S, E, W)
- 2 Reversible Wall Yin Yang Tiles
- 5 Temples (Triangles - 1 Fire, 1 Earth, 1 Metal, 1 Water, 1 Wood)
- 5 Palaces (Squares - 1 Fire, 1 Earth, 1 Metal, 1 Water, 1 Wood)
- 20 Towns (Circles - 4 Fire, 4 Earth, 4 Metal, 4 Water, 4 Wood)

163 Glass Tokens (30 Blue, 30 Red, 30 Yellow, 30 Green, 30 Silver, 13 Black)

6 Lineage Markers (4-sided Dice)

CARDS (95 Total)

5 Snake Cards

5 Dragon Cards

5 Tiger Cards

5 Leopard Cards

5 Crane Cards

5 Lineage Cards

1 Emperor Card

30 Town Cards (Circles)

30 Palace Cards (Squares)

4 Temple Cards (Triangles)