

Sage A.K.A Sages Tafl
 VERSION 1.0
 A game by Manny Fandango

Sage etiquette - Always be courteous to your adversary. Shake hands or bow after each game and explain to your adversary where they went wrong and what they did well. A board game is about more than just winning - its about developing our logical skills and having a load of fun too!

BOARD -

The board is made up of 8 X 9 squares.

There is a horizontal river running down the centre.

There are two towers opposite each other. The Sages start in their towers and may move out once space is made.

DEPLOYMENT -

The Sage starts in his study, desperately salvaging scrolls and books and dragon eggs. Once your warriors have made way, he may come out of the tower - this will take up an entire move as he has a thousand steps to climb down!

One skyship starts on the far left file the other on the far right. They start two ranks forward.

The apprentices start in a phalanx around the Sages tower (which is technically not on a square, but on a diagonal between the four central squares). They form two horizontal lines of four. The first line starts at the third file and ends at the sixth - this row is on the second rank.

The second line also starts at the third file and ends at the sixth - this row is on the second rank

Ss = Skyship. A = Apprentice. Sage = Sage (obviously :-P).

Ss		A	A	A	A		Ss	9
				Sage				
		A	A	A	A			8
								7
								6
-	-	-	-	RIVER	-	-	-	5
								4
								3
Ss		A	A	A	A		Ss	2
				Sage				
		A	A	A	A			1
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

Both sides deploy in an identical manner, mirroring one another across the board. See pictures for more details on how to set up.



OBJECTIVE -

Both Sages seek to escape down the river and take as many of their acolytes with them. Pieces may only escape by hopping into their warships and sailing off down either side of the river and off of the board.

To win one must score five points.
 Escaped Apprentices are worth 1 point each.
 Escaped Sages are worth 3.

Note: Pieces must already be on a river square in order to leave the map. Skyships may not leave the map as they are low on cosmic coal and will instead fight selflessly for the sake of their fellows!

PIECES -

Pieces are black or red. Obviously other colours may be used too! The darker colour moves first. Players alternate between moves, moving one piece at a time.
 A player may pass their turn if they cannot move any of their pieces..

Friendly pieces may not move through each other, nor may they move through your adversaries pieces. There are exceptions to this rule which will be explained later.
 There are three different types of pieces.

Sage -

Move one square horizontal, vertical or along any diagonal. Child of Fate (see rule in capturing section).

Apprentice -

Move any number of squares horizontal or vertical (the exception is when they reach the river.
Rules for rivers come later)

Skyship -

May move diagonally twice, changing direction mid-move if they wish. May fly over anything except another Skyship. May not end their turn on top of another piece.

CAPTURE -

To capture, you must surround an opposing piece on each side in a horizontal or vertical direction.

e,g 1: X O X<-----X - The O will be captured

e,g 2: X O - The O will not be captured
X

An opposing piece may bravely venture between two of your pieces - this will not result in a capture!
Pieces are only captured if they are *involuntarily* surrounded.

e.g. 3: X
O <-----O - The O will not be captured because she voluntarily moved between the
X's.
X

A careful (or downright lucky!) Sage may capture two or more opposing pieces in one move:

e,g 4: X O <-----X - Both O's will be captured, as both are now horizontally and / or vertically
surrounded on both sides.
O
X

Child of Fate: Sages are blessed by Fate and immune to danger! If captured, a Sage is not removed from the game board, but is instead placed back into her tower - and will have to spend a turn moving down the tower and onto the board.

THE RIVER -

Apprentices who reach the river must halt at the river bank. It will then take one turn to go into the river. Once in, they may move any amount of squares as normal along the river. They may also only move one square out of the river.

If there is a friendly piece already in the river, then friendly pieces may 'hop' over that piece and onto the far riverbank.

To escape, pieces need to move off either of the end two river squares. A piece may end its move right on the edge of the board - indeed, this is a good tactic to confound your adversary! Pieces *must* be in the river in order to escape.

Pieces may capture or be captured as normal in the river.

STORY -

For years, two Sages have lead their alchemists and acolytes in peaceful examination of the

Universe, high and safe on Quiet Mountain.

The gentle river flowed from its pinnacle and soft summer days were spent fishing and lazing about the grass, philosophising, designing new ships, innovating or just whimsically strumming a lute in the sun.

From Quiet Mountain came a host of new inventions - the cosmic coal burner, ambrosiac medicines, the skyship, the retracting lance and a miracle of science known as the 'tea-pot!'. Yet this pleasant advance into the realms of knowledge was not to last. The Sages and their alchemists started to pick up their pace and eagerly foray into unknown realms of the magical sciences. They started to attach their names to their achievements and sell them at great profit to the rest of the Empire, quickly expanding their towers and generating a new, exciting impetus toward rapid achievement. The old seals of restraint used to temper magic-use were abandoned, as each Sage became trapped in a cycle of desire; to achieve and push the boundaries of human achievement faster than Reality could catch up!

Then the inevitable happened. The unregulated flow of magical science tore the skein of Reality asunder. Quiet Mountain rocked and shook with Natures rebellion against mans misuse of his innate abilities. The Empire, built on veins of magical energy suddenly found itself bereft of this aether. The machines stopped working, the grain stopped growing and to further the catastrophe villagers started to pillage and loot and gobble up their neighbours - eager to avoid starving to death. And the cities were no better, some taking up arms against their fellows even before the granaries ran dry. Ancient pacts crumbled and mans towering edifice fell to the great chink in its thousand-year armour - the fear of starvation contained within every human being. And how quickly the Sages turned against one another, desperate in their scramble to reach the Empress and blame their counterpart for the disaster!

Take to your boat Sage! Before it is too late...

Pieces:

The Sage is a legendary character, robed in silk splendour and carrying a magical shield which forever shifts betwixt all colours. They are women and men of immense mental strength and magical fortitude. Sages are the children of Fate and are seemingly immune to dying of anything other than really, really old age!

Apprentices are horse mounted pupils of magic. They practice magery and boatcraft, yet are more than just men of magical science - for each Apprentice is also an able Captain, armed with a curved sword and armoured in a suit of diamond hard shells arranged in beautiful patterns.

A Skyship is a marvel of engineering. Its only magical vanity lies in the Runes of Gravity carved into the bottom of the hull, which alter the laws governing the Universe, convincing it not to drag these fine ships to the ground! If too much magical force is invested into these Runes, the skyship will lift off into the sky, never to be seen again!

Skyship pilots are rather wreckless, adventuring sorts, showing a marked disdain for the pedestrian ways of landlubbers (I mean, who needs legs anyway?).

CONTACT -

Please send any critique, suggestions or vehement hatred to:

gamedesign@ymail.com

OR

Boardgamegeek username: Mannyfandango

All of which I check with alarming regularity.

DEDICATION -

This game is dedicated to two groups of people.

Our chinese friends for giving the world Xiangqi - whose board has been utilised for this game.

And the ancient Celts and Germanians who gave the world Tafl games - which have determined how the apprentice pieces move and how all of the pieces capture.