



Published by



v0.5.0

(First Published: Jan 2012 - Last Updated: March 13th - 2025)

Table of Contents

Getting Started	3
Components	5
Boards	5
6R Continents	6
6R Island	7
6R Random	8
Rapid Nukes	9
Draft Boards	10
Tokens	11
Glossary	12
Setup	12
Turn Order	12
Victory Conditions	12
Units	13
Infantry	13
Artillery	14
Airborne	14
Base	15
General	16
Actions	17
Movement	17
Combat	17
Regions	18
Fields	18
Forests	18
Mountains	18
Water	18
City	18
Biohazard	19
River	19

Getting Started

Nuke boards are made-up of a number of hexagonal regions that can be one of six different biomes. The size of the board can vary, but **regular boards** are defined by the number of rings that surround the central region. A board with one ring (1R) will have only 6 regions surrounding a central region for a total of 7 regions, whereas a board with two rings (2R) will have 12 regions surrounding the first ring for a total of 19 regions. We recommend a minimum of one ring per player, but the final size is dependent upon your preferred style. Players are given ten tokens per ring (board size). Depending upon where those tokens are located and how many of them are placed together, they can represent any of the following:

- **Hostages** – your tokens in someone else's hand
- **Nukes** – your tokens in your hand
- **Units** – your tokens on the board
- **Infantry** – a single unit within a single region on the board
- **Artillery** – two units within a single region on the board
- **Airborne** – three units within a single region on the board
- **Bases** – four or more units within a single region on the board
- **General** - a single unit emerging from a base that is going to trigger a nuke

A player can win the game by either having a base on or nuking an opponent's starting region; also known as headquarters, or being the last player to have any hostages or units left in the game. To setup, players place nine units in their headquarters and one nuke beside the board. The remaining units are shared evenly between opponents as hostages. Players then take turns performing two actions in specific order:

- 1) Return a hostage to an active player (**if able**)
- 2) Move units from a single region (**required**)

When returning a hostage to an active player, the player returning the hostage can choose the region that the hostage will return to, but it must be a region that already contains friendly units and cannot be a starting region. However, any players with nine units in any of their bases cannot be given hostages that turn, and depending upon the number of players, may result in the opportunity for an opponent to make a move without needing to return a hostage that turn. This order of play continues until all but one player is able to return a hostage and then make a move. This mechanic enforces a limited number of turns and a ticking-bomb in the process. Extra time can be earned by capturing units, which convert into hostages.

Units may only move into regions that are occupied by opponent units if they have strength exceeding their opponent's strength. By default, a successful attack will result in enemy units being destroyed and removed from the game. An attacker's strength is calculated by the number of units that are moving into the region plus an additional one strength for every surrounding region that contains one or more of their units. A defender's strength is only calculated based on the number of units that are within the region the attacking player has entered. For every additional strength that the attacker has, that player can choose to destroy any one of their own units involved in the attack in order to capture one of their opponent's units to be used as an additional hostage, instead of it being destroyed. Since generals cannot capture units and only emerge from a base when also detonating a nuke, and because bases cannot move; the only units that can capture other units are infantry, artillery platoons and airborne platoons.

Each hexagonal region on a nuke board can be one of the following biomes:

- **Fields** (Light Green) - no restrictions for anything
- **Forests** (Dark Green) - artillery cannot end their turn alone on forests
- **Mountains** (Grey) - airborne cannot pass through or end their turn alone on mountains
- **Water** (Blue) - infantry, artillery and generals cannot end their turn alone on water
- **Deserts** (Yellow) - infantry and generals cannot end their turn alone in deserts
- **Cities** (Pink) - can be utilized by infantry, artillery, airborne, generals and bases in special ways

Some units may not end their turn in a water, desert or forest region, and some units may not move through or into mountain regions. Some units can move through regions containing other units, whereas some units are restricted - all of which is indicated below:

Unit	Water	Desert	Forest	Mountain	Infantry	Artillery	Airborne	Base
Infantry	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y (own)	Y (own)
Artillery	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y (any)	Y (any)	Y (any)
Airborne	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y (own)	Y (any)	Y (own)
General	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y (any)	Y (any)	Y (any)

Infantry can move within connected regions of the same biome before making a move of one into any adjacent region of a different biome that is not water or desert. City biomes or airborne units and bases belonging to the same player can be considered as the same biome as the one that the infantry came from or are moving to, but cannot be both, unless both are the same.

Artillery can only move by directly crossing over other units that are adjacent to the artillery or other units the artillery are jumping over. By default, artillery move in a straight line, but this movement can be pivoted when passing over a city, airborne or base owned by the same player, so long as the direction they wish to turn also has other units directly adjacent that can be used to continue the jump in that direction.

Airborne must move exactly two regions, and cannot move to a region that could otherwise be reached with only a single movement. If they end their turn on a city, or airborne and bases belonging to the same player, the airborne can perform a slingshot; giving them another exact two movements.

Generals move in the same way that artillery do, but like infantry, cannot end their move alone within a water or desert region, nor can they ever capture any units. A general can only move from a base and may only move into an empty region or into a region containing its own units, but can only do so if that player also has an available nuke left to use. In moving a general, that general automatically triggers an available nuke and destroys all units in that region and all adjacent regions.

A base can only contain a maximum of nine units and only one base can be placed in any region. When establishing a base with five or more units in a city region that has not already harvested a nuke, the player establishing or bolstering the base of five or more may convert one of those units into a nuke.

Components

To play Nukes, you need only a board and some tokens.

Boards

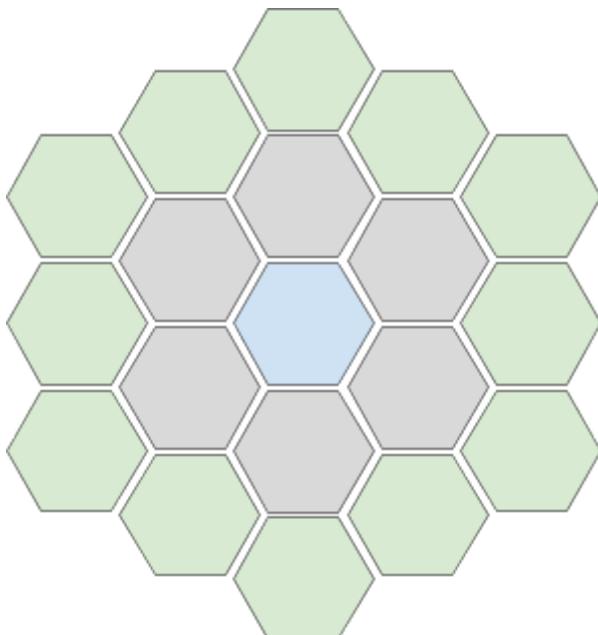
It is the board that can make every game of Nukes feel like a first. Each board can use up-to six different coloured hexagons (also known as biomes) as available regions for units to be placed. The various types of boards can be categorised as follows:

- **Regular** - uses a ring system surrounding a central region
- **Irregular** - can be any shape or size

Regardless of whether they are regular or irregular in shape, they can also be:

- **Referenced** - predefined setup usually printed onto a single surface
- **Draft** - utilizes individual tiles for regions that are placed by players
- **Random** - utilizes individual tiles for regions that are placed randomly

Regular boards are defined by the number of rings that surround the central region. A board with one ring (1R) will have only 6 regions surrounding a central region for a total of 7 regions, whereas a board with two rings (2R) will have 12 regions surrounding the first ring for a total of 19 regions:

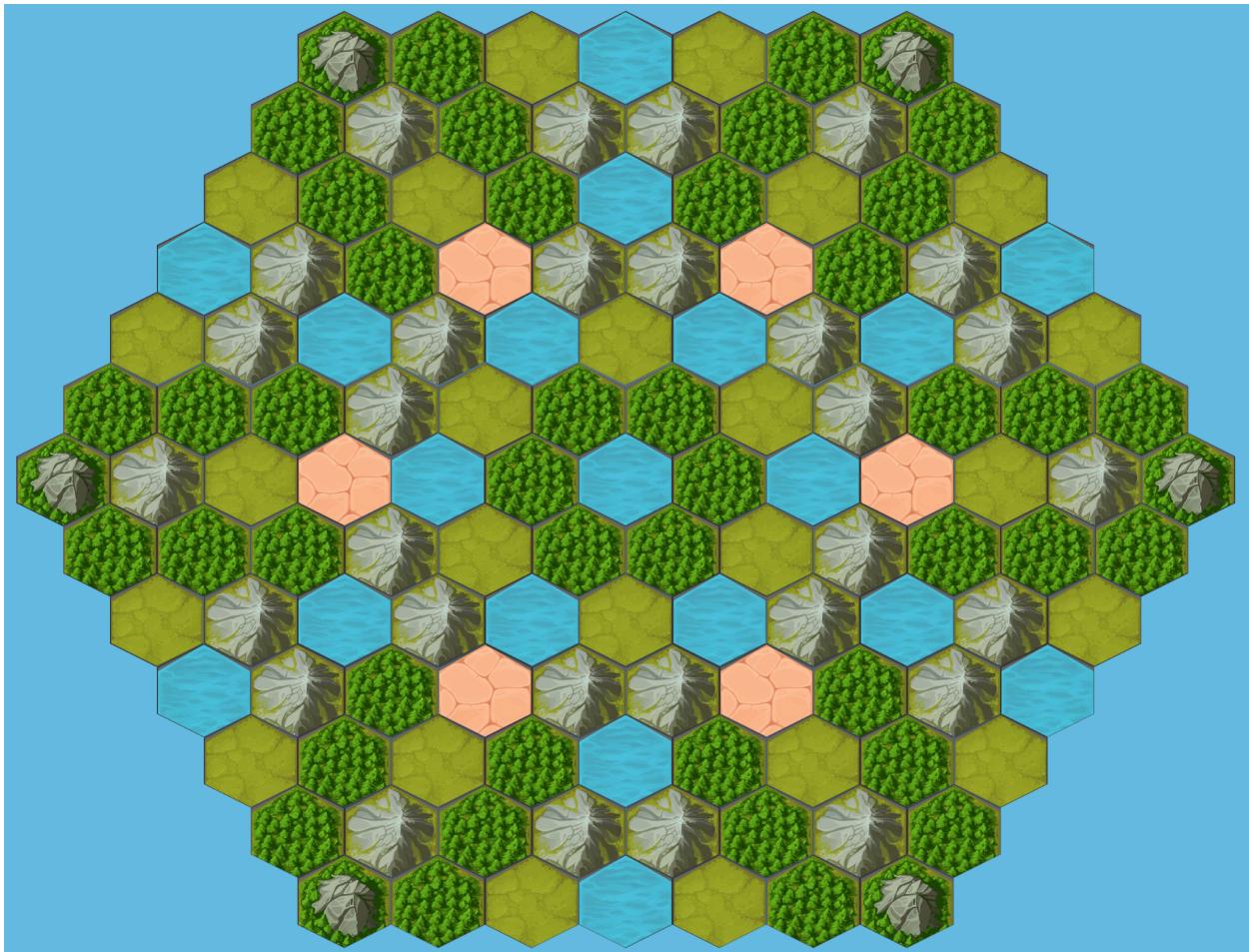


In this 2R example, the blue hexagon represents the central water region. The six grey hexagons represent the first ring of mountain regions whereas the twelve light green hexagons surrounding the mountains represent the second ring of field regions.

It is recommended that games take place on a board with a minimum of one ring per player, but this will ultimately depend upon your preference for play. Small boards provide a quicker more puzzle-like game, whereas bigger boards tend to provide more room for varying strategies.

6R Continents

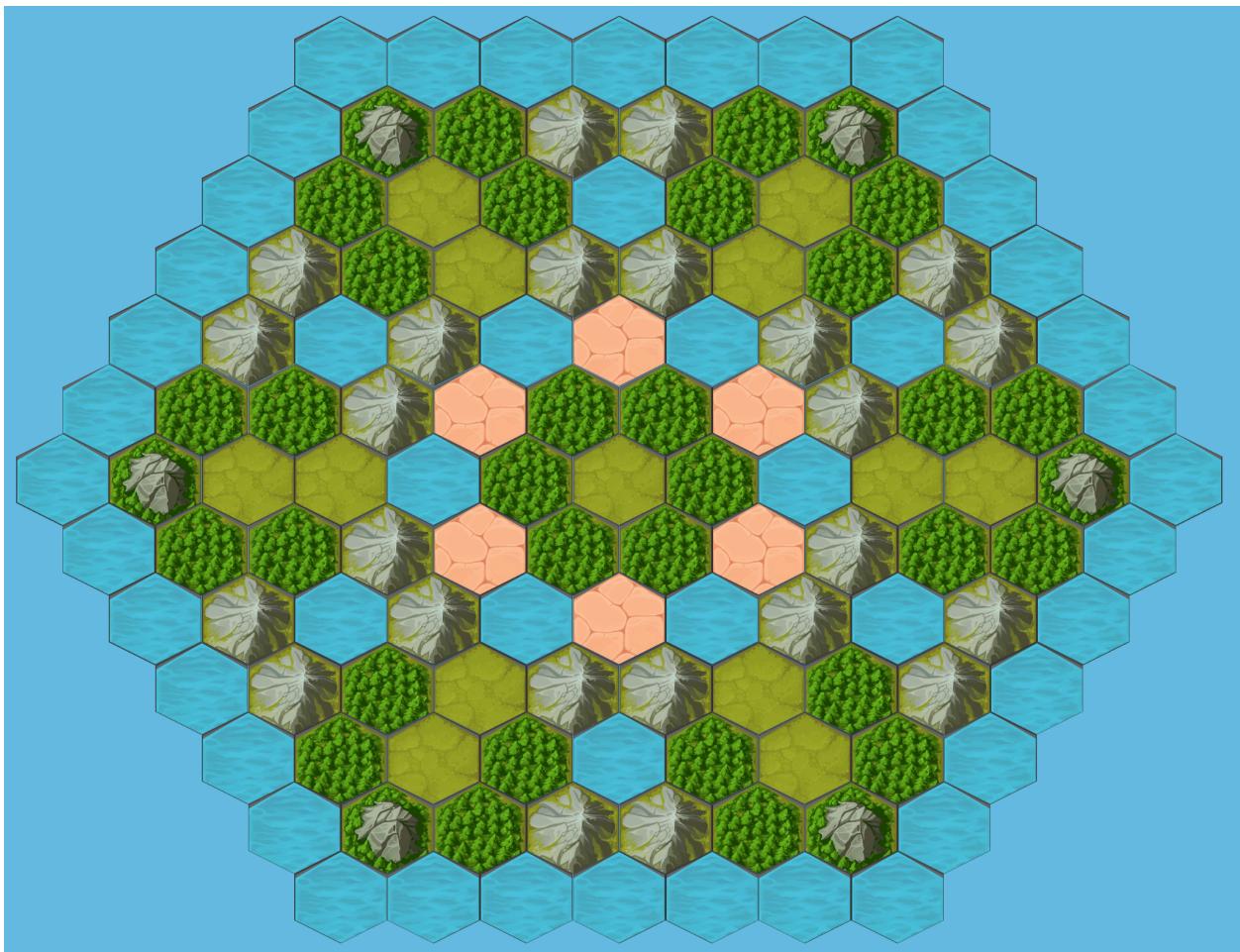
The following **regular referenced** board provides options for 2, 3, 4 and 6 player games:



The board featured above is perhaps the most versatile referenced board.

6R Island

Used as a centerpiece for large scale games surrounded by other islands or continents:

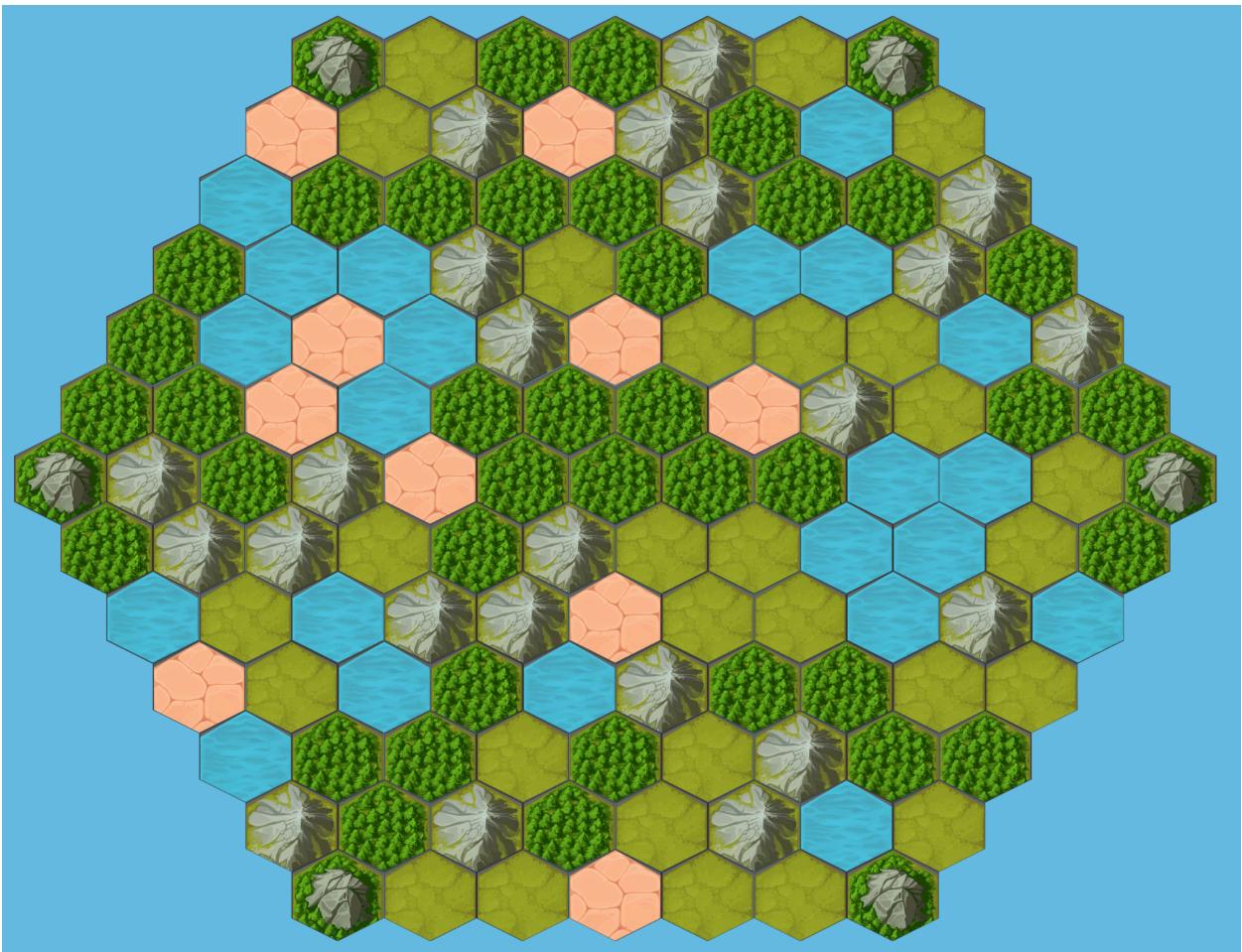


Additionally, the above board can also be used for more confined games.

Standard reference boards should allow for symmetrical game-play.

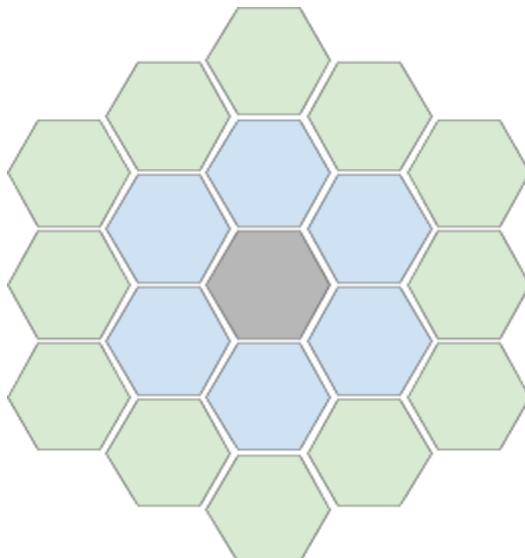
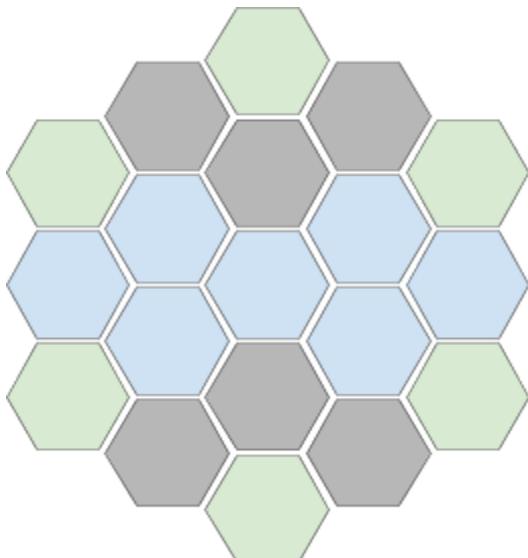
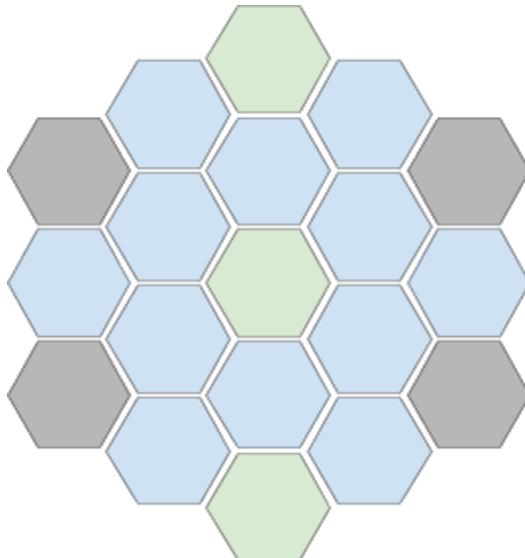
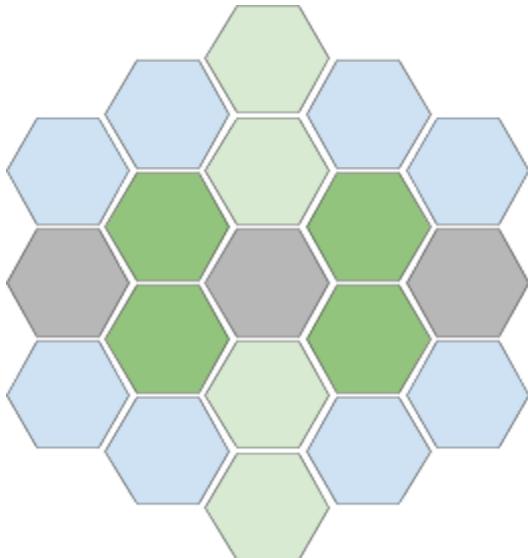
6R Random

An example of a **regular random** setup board is shown below:



Rapid Nukes

We recommend removing cities and deserts when playing on smaller 2R or 3R boards, but anything is possible. Here are some example 2R boards in order to help get you started:



Draft Boards

Drafting makes board setup part of the game and helps to ensure that every game has the potential to be your first - but to do so, it requires the use of individual regional tiles, such as those provided by the popular Catan game that has sold over 45 million copies.

A desert, water or city region tile is placed in the middle of the board and each player places their headquarters (starting city region) at the edge of the board equally spaced from other players. Players then take turns placing a tile that must be connected to another tile that has already been placed. However, players may not place cities adjacent to other cities if given a choice. To do this, each player should be given an equal number of regions of equal types as seen in the table below to choose from:

# Players	Fields	Forest	Mountains	City	Water	Desert	Needed	Random	Nuke 2 Win
2	6	6	6	4	5	3	60 (4R)	0	5
3	4	4	4	3	3	2	60 (4R)	0	5
4	3	3	3	2	3	1	60 (4R)	0	5
2	8	8	8	7	8	6	90 (5R)	0	8
3	5	5	5	5	5	5	90 (5R)	0	8
4	4	4	4	3	4	6	90 (5R)	2	7
5	3	3	3	3	3	3	90 (5R)	0	8
6	3	3	3	2	2	2	90 (5R)	0	7
4	6	6	6	4	5	4	126 (6R)	2	9
5	5	5	5	5	3	2	126 (6R)	1	13
6	4	4	4	3	3	3	126 (6R)	0	10
7	3	3	3	3	3	3	126 (6R)	0	11
8	3	3	3	2	2	2	126 (6R)	6	9

Before placing any tiles, any un-dealt terrain (as seen by some 4, 5 and 8 player games above) should be randomly placed around the central region before setup commences.

Tokens

The exact number of tokens recommended for play should be based upon the number of rings, and whether the number of opponents can equally share your hostages or not - as shown below:

Players	Rings	Regions	Units	Hostages	Nukes	Player Tokens
2	2	19	9	10 X 1	1	20
2	3	37	9	20 X 1	1	30
2	4	61	9	30 X 1	1	40
2	5	91	9	40 X 1	1	50
2	6	127	9	50 X 1	1	60
3	2	19	9	5 X 2	1	20
3	3	37	9	10 X 2	1	30
3	4	61	9	15 X 2	1	40
3	5	91	9	20 X 2	1	50
3	6	127	9	25 X 2	1	60
4	2	19	9	3 X 3	1	19
4	3	37	9	6 X 3	1	28
4	4	61	9	10 X 3	1	40
4	5	91	9	13 X 3	1	49
4	6	127	9	16 X 3	1	58
5	2	19	9	2 X 4	1	18
5	3	37	9	5 X 4	1	30
5	4	61	9	7 X 4	1	38
5	5	91	9	10 X 4	1	50
5	6	127	9	12 X 4	1	58
6	2	19	9	2 X 5	1	20
6	3	37	9	4 X 5	1	30
6	4	61	9	6 X 5	1	40
6	5	91	9	8 X 5	1	50
6	6	127	9	10 X 5	1	60

Glossary

Nukes was designed as a system that can be adapted to all kinds of play styles - and although it is possible for any number of players to play, so long as the required board and necessary tokens are available, Nukes was specifically designed with 2 to 6 players in mind, which we will cover in more detail throughout this glossary, including examples of how units move, capture and destroy opponents.

Special river regions can be used to enable symmetrical games with odd numbers of players and (or) simply something completely different - should the board not have the required number of spaces to naturally split odd numbers of players or simply want to add some extra complexity to the game.

Setup

Assuming the board has been setup; players then give themselves one of their tokens as a nuke and place nine units in their headquarters (starting city region) at the edge of the board. Their remaining tokens should be split and distributed equally between other players as hostages. The exact number of tokens is dependent upon the number of players and size of the board, as shown in the components section of this document, but typically requires a total of ten tokens per ring.

Turn Order

Players take turns performing two actions in specific order:

- 1) Return a hostage to an active player (**if able**)
- 2) Move units from a single region (**required**)

When returning a hostage to an active player, the player returning the hostage can choose the region that the hostage will return to, but it must be a region that already contains friendly units and cannot be a starting region. If the placed unit results in an invalid placement (such as a new airborne platoon in a mountain region), those units are destroyed. Destroyed units are removed from the game, whereas captured units are given to the player capturing them as a way to increase their hostage count.

However, if a player has nine units in any of their bases, the player that would need to return the hostage cannot return a hostage to that player for that turn. This order continues until all but one player is able to start their turn by returning a hostage and then making a move - providing a limited number of turns.

Victory Conditions

Someone can win the game in any one of the following ways:

- A player establishes a base on an opponent's headquarters (starting region)
- A player Nukes an opponent's headquarters (starting region)
- A player is the last person to be able to return a hostage
- A player is the last person to have units on the board
- A player holds more than 50% of the available Nuke supply (**optional based on board**)

Units

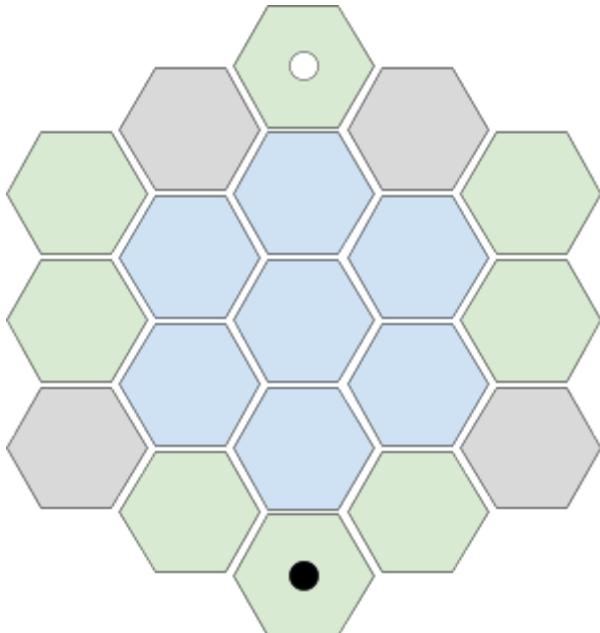
Units are represented on the board as individual tokens of identical shapes. Depending upon how units are grouped together they can be used as any combination of the following ranks:

- **Infantry** - one unit
- **Artillery** - two units
- **Airborne** - three units
- **Base** - between four to nine units
- **General** - one unit from a base

Units that are grouped together for movement are referred to as platoons, and include an artillery platoon and an airborne platoon. Only infantry units, artillery platoons and airborne platoons are able to capture opponent units, and they do so by completing a movement with their turn ending on an opponent's region. They can only do this if their strength is higher than the unit strength they are attacking. Surrounding units providing support can bolster the strength of an attacking unit or platoon by one for each adjacent region that has one or more units. By default, units are destroyed, but for every one additional strength that the attacker has they may destroy one of their own units in order to capture one of the opponent units instead.

Infantry

Infantry platoons are represented by a single unit in a single region.



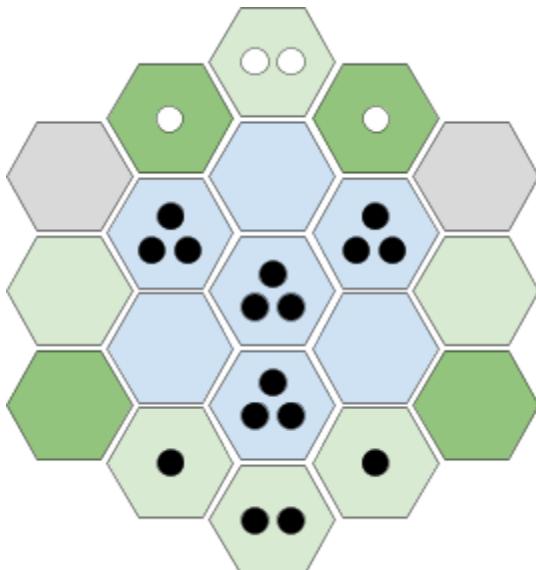
Infantry may move from one region to any adjacent region that is not water or desert. Regions that are of the same type as an infantry's starting biome can be moved through freely before utilising that infantry's movement of one. However, infantry are unable to move through regions with other infantry or artillery platoons, and can only move through airborne platoons and bases that are owned by the same player.

In this example, the white infantry can only move one region to the mountains, whereas the black player can move two regions into either of their mountains.

An infantry unit is unable to attack any other units without receiving support.

Artillery

Artillery platoons are represented by two units in a single region. Two infantry units within the same region are automatically referred to as an artillery platoon.

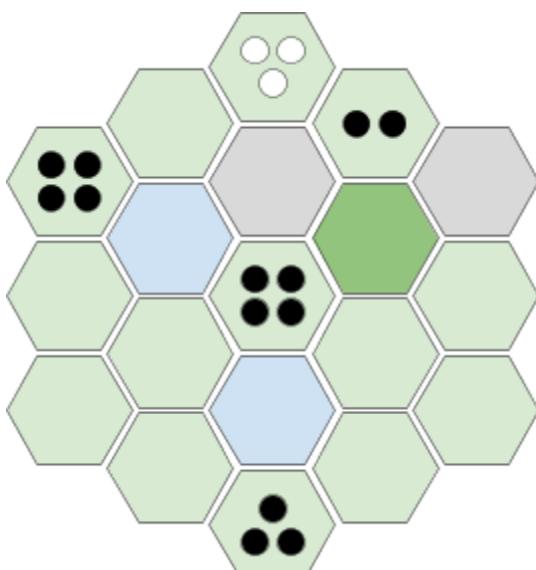


Artillery can move as many regions as they are able to jump. Other units of any type or player provide a path that artillery can cross, but each region they cross must be directly adjacent to another region that they have jumped. They do this by moving in straight lines and only pivoting their angle at bridges (airborne platoons, bases and city biomes owned by the same player). Artillery are also able to move over city biomes as though those regions had units in them. Artillery may not end their turn on a water or forest region. Without support, artillery platoons are only able to capture or attack single infantry units.

In this example, the only unoccupied region that either of the players artillery platoons can move to are the two mountain regions.

Airborne

Airborne platoons are represented by three units in a single region. Three infantry units within the same region are automatically referred to as an airborne platoon.



Airborne platoons must move exactly two spaces and must end their move on a tile that cannot otherwise be reached by making a single move. Airborne platoons cannot pass through mountain regions or enemy artillery and bases, neither can they end their turn on mountain regions. If ending their turn on a city, airborne platoon or base they own, they can take an extra move of exactly two. An airborne platoon can also act as a city biome, bridging different biome types for infantry use, or to pivot directions of artillery and generals - so long as those using the bridge belong to the same player.

In this example, the white player can only move their airborne platoon into the water region,

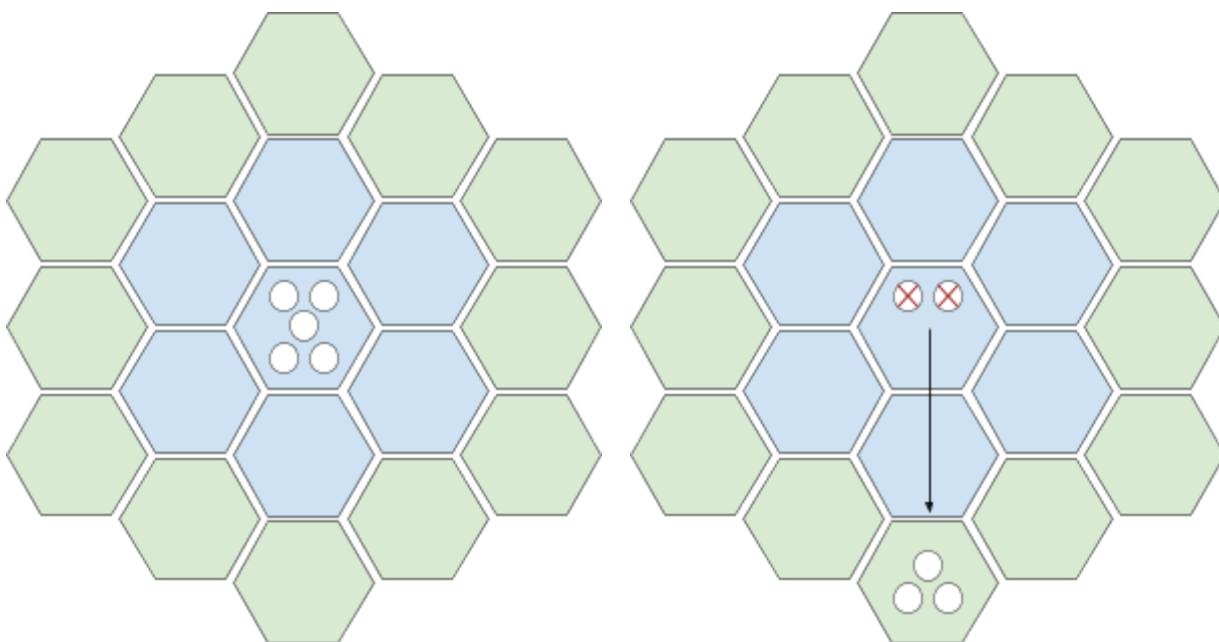
whereas the black player can move their airborne platoon to any light green field region.

Base

Any region with more than three units is referred to as a base. Although a base cannot move, a general, infantry unit, artillery platoon or airborne platoon may move from a base and a base can also act as a city biome, bridging different biome types for infantry belonging to the same player or changing the direction of artillery and generals. It is also important to note that there is a limit of nine units for a base, which prevents any region from ever having more than nine units in it. If this limit is reached by any base, opposing units are unable to return hostages to that player.

When a player establishes a base of five or more units in a city region other than their starting region and that city has not already had a Nuke harvested from it; they have the option to convert one of those units into a Nuke and flip over the tile to show that the city has produced a Nuke.

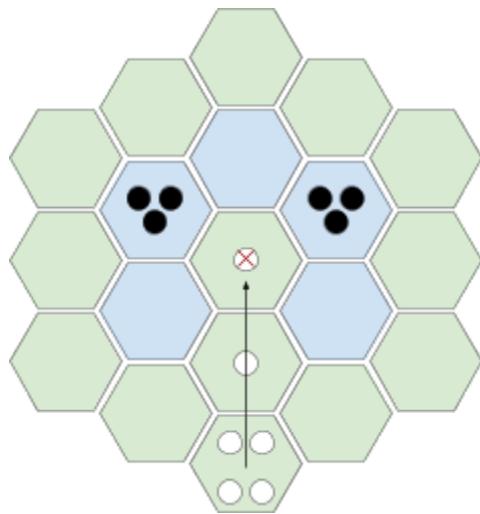
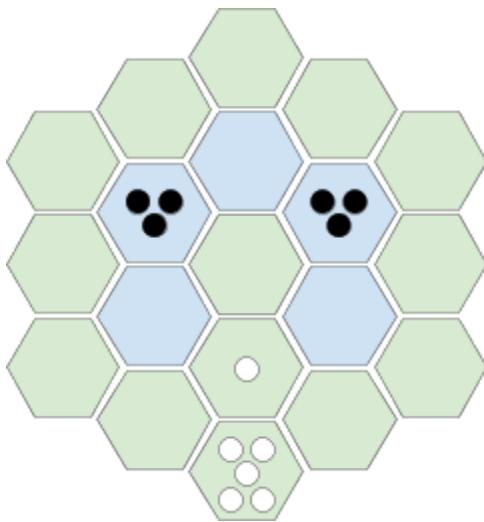
When units move out of a base, the units that remain must follow the rules of the biome. If for example a base of five established on a water biome moves an airborne platoon of three units out of the base, it would mean that there would be an artillery platoon of two units remaining where the base once was, and artillery is not allowed on water. Those units would be destroyed and removed from the game when the airborne platoon moves out - as illustrated below:



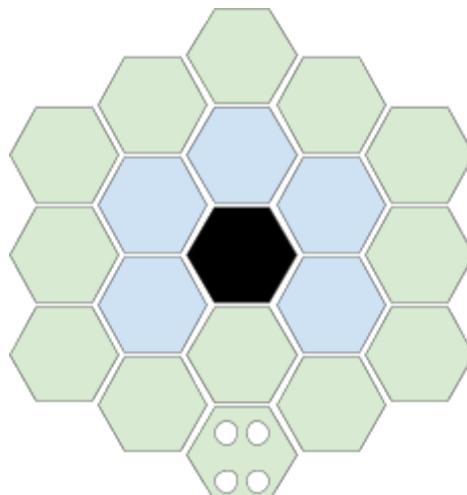
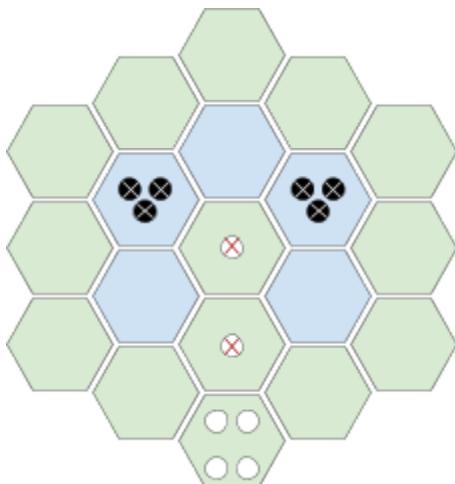
General

Generals are never seen and can only emerge from a base if they are also going to explode by triggering their nuclear weapon, which cannot be done if the player does not have a nuke to use. A general moves in the same way as artillery, by crossing over other units of any type or player, but is also as vulnerable as infantry and unable to end their go alone in either water or a desert. A general can only end its turn on an empty space or within a friendly set of units as part of movement and only if it then triggers a nuke, which destroys all units within the region it ended its turn as well as all units in all regions surrounding that region. Additionally, the region that the general ended their turn on is removed from the game.

An example of a general moving by detonating a Nuke can be seen below:



In this example, the white player used his general to destroy two of his own units and six of the black player's units whilst also turning the center region into an inaccessible biohazard. All of the units destroyed by this Nuke were removed from the game.



Actions

Turns proceed clockwise with each player potentially performing two actions in their turn, which must be performed in the following sequence:

- 1) Return a hostage
- 2) Move unit(s)

When returning hostages to an active player, the player returning the hostage can choose the region that the hostage will return to, but it must be a region that already contains friendly units and cannot be a starting region. If a player has nine units in any of their bases, other players may not return hostages. Returning a hostage can also result in a loss of units. If (for example) a player has artillery units in a mountain, returning a hostage to that region would result in that set of units becoming airborne, which cannot be used in mountain regions, so are then destroyed.

Any units destroyed are removed from the game. Units captured are given to the player capturing them so that they can be used as hostages and in-turn provide that player with more available turns to make. If a player is unable to return a hostage because they no longer have any hostages to return and are required to return a hostage, or they have no units, they are removed from the game.

Movement

Only after a player returns a hostage to an opposing player are they then entitled to move.

Units can only be moved from a single region and only as either a single infantry or general unit, or as an artillery or airborne platoon. Units cannot move into a region occupied by opponent units unless they are attacking those units and any units that may remain in a region after moving units from that region must adhere to rank rules. This is especially important when water, deserts or mountains are concerned.

Combat

Units may only move into regions that are occupied by opponent units if they have strength exceeding their opponent's strength. By default, a successful attack will result in enemy units being destroyed and removed from the game. An attacker's strength is calculated by the number of units that are moving into the region plus an additional one strength for every surrounding region that contains one or more of their units. A defender's strength is only calculated based on the number of units that are within the region the attacking player has entered. For every additional strength that the attacker has, that player can choose to destroy any one of their own units involved in the attack in order to capture one of their opponent's units to be used as an additional hostage, instead of it being destroyed.

Regions

A region is a hexagonal space on the board. Each region is one of the following biomes:

- **Fields** (Light Green) - no restrictions for anything
- **Forests** (Dark Green) - artillery cannot end their turn alone on forests
- **Mountains** (Grey) - airborne cannot pass through or end their turn alone on mountains
- **Water** (Blue) - infantry, artillery and generals cannot end their turn alone on water
- **Deserts** (Yellow) - infantry and generals cannot end their turn alone in deserts
- **Cities** (Pink) - can be utilized by infantry, artillery, airborne, generals and bases in special ways
- **Biohazard** (Black / Removed) - cannot move into or through this region
- **River** (Blue Lines on Light Green) - primarily used with odd numbers of players when needed

Fields

Fields are considered land regions that can be accessed and controlled by any units.

Forests

Artillery cannot end their turn alone on forests.

Mountains

Airborne cannot pass through or end their turn alone on mountains.

Water

Infantry or artillery cannot end their turn alone on water.

Deserts

Infantry cannot end their turn alone on deserts.

City

City regions are considered land regions and for the purposes of infantry, a city can also be used as either one of a field, forest, or mountain. A city can also be used as a bridge for artillery, allowing them to move over cities without needing to have units in them, as opposed to cities they own, which can also be used to change the direction of artillery units.

Players establishing or bolstering bases with five or more units in city regions that have not already harvested a Nuke have the option to convert one of the units in that base into a Nuke, taking the unit into their hand and flipping or replacing the city region with a harvested city region.

Biohazard

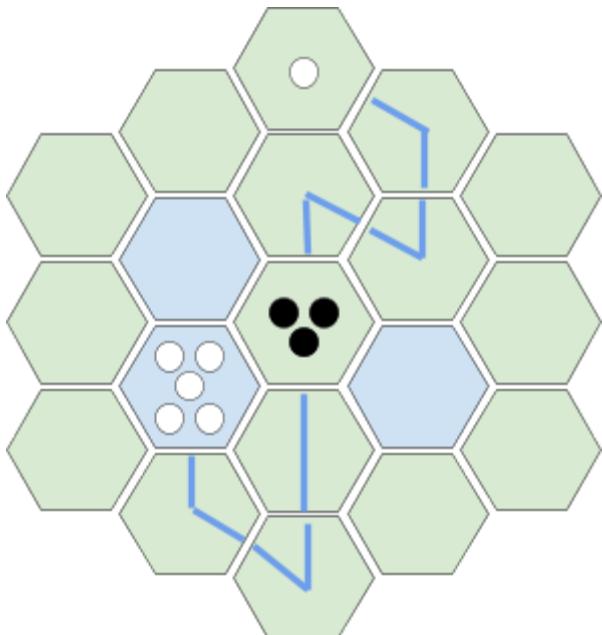
Biohazardous regions are inaccessible by any unit type and act as holes in the board. They only appear after a nuclear explosion, replacing the space wherever a general ends its turn.

River

Rivers are entirely optional and are recommended to be used in odd-player games that cannot be supported by the board or number of total tiles or for adding complexity to big board games.

Rivers enable regions they connect to be adjacent for movement, support and blind-sides. Infantry can move through them as though they were cities, but in the directions the rivers flow and artillery can jump over them and pivot as though they were cities, but only if there are also units at the end of those rivers to continue jumping over. Airborne may fly over rivers but do not get any additional movement for doing so and are not able to use them for slingshots.

No units may ever end their turn on a region with a river.



In this example, with rivers the white player has already blind-sided black as the infantry and base are directly opposite the black platoon already.