

EPHEMERAL PATH

Rules of Play Version: 0.26

The paths have opened up across space and time. Beings of all types have been lured through the mystifying black gates that mark the path's root. Whatever the being's reason for embarking along the path, science, curiosity, instinct, their aspirations shift to mere survival. Once the gate had been activated it vanishes shortly after, never returning. Those who managed to traverse the path found themselves on a desolate planet, with no way home. The planet grew more crowded and dangerous by the hour as intelligent creatures from every corner of the universe flooded its barren surface. After some time, the gates that mark the head of the path began to appear on this planet as well. With resources running thin, most chose to take their chances with these newly opened gates. If they could only get to them before they close.

ABOUT EPHEMERAL PATH

Ephemeral Path is a print and play table top skirmish game for two players. Ephemeral Path is designed with the goal of being accessible to a wide variety of players and have a low barrier to entry for new players. There are no components that are specifically required for the game, although some printable ones are included if players choose to use them. Players instead can use pieces they already own along with an online figure builder that will set traits, specification, and abilities for the chosen figures.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO PLAY

1. A Figure Set - A figure set consists of two to four pieces that have a circular base between 19 and 67mm in diameter. These figures can be miniatures, standees, tokens, or any other similar object.
2. Spec Sheets - Each figure will need to have a corresponding spec sheet that will define it's characteristics such as its name, hit points, abilities and more. Spec sheets can be created and printed from www.ephemeralpath.com.
3. Play Area - The play area for Ephemeral Path is 40cm x 40cm square.
4. Terrain - Five items to be used as terrain. These can be any items players wish to use but must be agreed upon by both players before the game begins.
5. A Gate - 9cm flat circle.
6. Range Ruler - A ruler that measures in centimeters (cm).
7. Dice - Each player needs two sets of D4, D6, D8, D10, and D12.
8. A pencil or pen

MEET MIRA



Mira is an elf. She will guide you through some game play examples a little later.

CONSTRUCTING A FIGURE SET

There are no predefined figures for Ephemeral Path. Any miniature, standee, token, or similar object may be chosen as a figure. The base of the figure must be circular. Some small deviation from a perfect circle is allowed as long as it is agreed upon by both players. Base diameter must be between 19 and 67mm. Figures are crafted prior to the start of a game. Each player needs to bring a fully formed figure set with them to the start of the game. A figure set consists of 2-4 figures with no more than 100 total spec points used between all figures. Spec points are the unit of measure when assigning stats to figures using the figure builder.

Assigning Spec Points to a Figure's Base Specs

The number of base spec points a figure has to distribute are based on its class. The chart for the minimum and maximum base spec points are below:

| | |
|------------|---------|
| Disruptor: | 10 - 25 |
| Runner: | 10 - 25 |
| Tactician: | 15 - 30 |
| Leader: | 20 - 35 |

Each figure has the following base traits in which base spec points can be contributed

Hit points:

Movement (each spec point is worth 2 cm):

Force:

Range (each spec point is worth 5 cm):

Figure Set Builder available at www.ephemeralpath.com
Figure Spec Sheet Example

The screenshot shows a character creation interface for 'Mira'. The character is a Disruptor Female Elf with Bow, with a base points range of 10-25. The character has 6 Hit Points, 8 Movement, 4 Force, and 16 cm Range. Abilities include Long Bow (4 points), Flaming Arrow (3 points), and Name... (0 points). The character has 31 spec points total. The interface includes sections for Figure Points, Hit Points, Actions, Prep Tokens, and Ability cards.

| Figure Points | 31 | Mira |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Class | Disruptor | B |
| Female Elf with Bow | D | J |
| Base Points Range | 10 - 25 | N |
| Hit Points | 6 | E |
| Movement | 8 | G |
| Force | 6 | F |
| Range | 4 | H |
| Ability 1 | Long Bow | I |
| Ability 2 | Flaming Arrow | M |
| Ability 3 | Name... | None Selected |
| P | Print View | |

Actions: (K) Represented by three circles.

Prep Tokens: (L) Represented by three sets of three hexagons each.

Ability Cards:

- ATTACK:** D4 Pnts: 4, Attack, Target 1, Range +10cm, Damage: Force + [D6]
- MISC:** D4 Pnts: 3, 2 Spray Damage after standard attack, Spray Rar [D6]

Hit points is the number of damage a figure can take before it is defeated and must be removed from the play area.

Movement is the total number of cm that a figure can move when taking the move action. See more details on moving figures in the "Taking Actions" section.

Force is a figure's basic attack. See more detail on attacking in the "Taking Actions" section.

Range is the distance away a target figure can be from the active figure's base in order to be considered a target. The distance is in cm and it is multiplied by 5 for every base spec point

Adding Abilities to figure

Players may choose to add special abilities to a figure. Each ability has a cost in spec points that must be added to the figure's total points when the player is crafting their figure set. A figure's class dictates what abilities are available and are listed in the Ephemeral Path Ability Guide. Abilities may be used multiple times by the same figure as long as that figure has the foraged dice to do so (more on foraged dice on page 3). For this reason, an ability only needs to be added once to any figure.

Often these abilities will require foraged dice in order to activate them. For this reason, it may be advantageous to assign multiple abilities to a figure because the outcome of the foraging phase is unknown when creating a figure set. Foraged dice will be explained later in this rule book.

Determining figure's Number of Actions

The number of actions a figure can take in a game depends on the figure's class. Leader figures will only get two actions each game but begin the game with two preparation (prep) tokens. All other classes begin the game with three available actions.

- A: Figure's Name
- B: Figure's total spec points
- C: Figure's class
- D: Description of figure
- E: Base spec points, includes Hit Points, Force, Movement, and Range
- F: Ability name
- G: Ability spec points
- H: Ability description in text
- I: Ability description in cards
- J: Hit Points represented by icons
- K: Allowed actions represented by icons
- L: Prep Tokens represented by icons
- M: Foraged die required for a given ability
- N: Movement and Range expressed in cm
- P: Toggle button for print view

SET UP

Determining Player X and Player Y

Throughout this rules explanation players will sometimes be referred to as either Player X or Player Y. If one player has a lower number of total spec points (the sum of all of their figures) than another player, then that player may choose to be either Player X or Player Y. If both players have the same number of total spec points then each player roles a D6. The player that rolls the highest value may choose to be either Player X or Player Y.

Place the 40cm x 40cm play area within reach of both players.

Place the gate and the five pieces of terrain next to the play area. Each player places their figures and figure spec sheets close to them.

Beginning with Player X, players take turns placing a piece of terrain of their choice onto the play area. The gate is treated as a piece of terrain for purposes of placement. No part of the terrain may fall outside of the play area and no two pieces of terrain may be in contact with each other. The gate must be placed at least 5 cm from the edge of the play area.

GAME PLAY

Game play in Ephemeral Path is broken into two phases, the Foraging phase and the Activation phase.

Foraging Phase

The Foraging phase is broken into 4 steps:

1. Players each simultaneously rolls the following types of dice: D4, D6, D8, D10, D12.
2. Beginning with player Y, one die is chosen from the rolled dice and placed on a figure's spec sheet. The die may be chosen from dice rolled by either player. The value of the die may not be changed from its rolled value. This figure must then immediately be placed onto the play area with the edge of its base touching ANY edge of the play area (no side belongs to any particular player). The figure may not be placed in contact with or overlapping the gate and must be at least 5 cm from an opponent's figure. The figure may be placed onto terrain as long as the edge of its base still is aligned with the imaginary plane of the play area's edge. A player may choose to pass to neither pick up a die or place a unit on the board. If the player forages a die for a figure already placed on the board then they may place the die on that figure's spec sheet without placing a new unit on the board.
3. Player X then chooses a die as described in step 2

4. Steps 2 and 3 are repeated until all figures are on the play area. At this point, players may continue choosing dice and assigning them to figure spec sheets until there are no more dice remaining to be foraged, all figures are on the play area, or no player has an ability that matches an available die. Note: a figure must have an ability that requires a certain die to forage it. If a player cannot forage any die because none of their figures have abilities that require any of the remaining dice then they must pass.

If both players pass consecutively then no more dice can be foraged and players continue by alternating placing figures on the play area until no figures are left to be placed.

Activation Phase

Player X chooses which player activates a figure first.

The player to activate first chooses one figure from their figure set to activate. The first unit activated in the game may only use one of it's available actions. When a figure takes an action, players mark one of the circular action icons on that figure's spec sheet to indicate it now has one less action.

The player who is activating second then gets to activate one figure using as many of that figure's actions as they wish. Play then continues with each player activating one figure until no figures have any remaining actions.

The game ends when each player has no more available actions on any of their figures.

TERRAIN

There are no restrictions on what items can be used for terrain in Ephemeral Path but below are some things to keep in mind when choosing:

- If using terrain intended to have figure's underneath it, such as a bridge, ensure that all player's figures are not too tall to pass under it.
- Ephemeral Path has a small play area and larger terrain may have a significant effect on the game. This effect may be the desired outcome but should be considered.
- Parts of terrain that touch the play area are going to provide cover regardless of it's height. Inversely, things like overhang may not provide cover at all because the terrain is not touching the play area.

TAKING ACTIONS

Each turn, a player chooses one figure to activate. When a figure is chosen to be activated, a player may take up to that figure's maximum number of actions with that figure. Actions may be taken one after another or may be broken up across multiple turns. There is no limit to how many times a figure can use a single action type during their activation as long as it doesn't exceed the maximum number of actions that figure is allotted. Example: Mira has three actions available. On the player's first turn, they choose to activate Mira and use one of Mira's actions. Several turns later, the player activates Mira again and chooses to use the last two of Mira's actions.

The following actions are available to a figure during their activation: Move, Attack, Prepare, Use An Ability.

Move

Move the chosen figure. In Ephemeral Path, centimeters (cm) are used as the unit of movement. The distance (in cm) the figure can be moved is equal to its movement spec multiplied by two. Movement can be broken up into multiple straight line distances as long as the total distance moved doesn't exceed the figures movement spec. Distance is measured from the center of the figure's base, parallel to the movement direction. Figures may not move through terrain. For the purposes of movement, enemy bases are treated as terrain. "Move through" is considered to mean that the moving figure's base overlaps the terrain at any point along the movement path. A figure may move over terrain or onto terrain by adding the terrain's height (in cm) to the distance of the movement. The height that is added is the highest point of the terrain that the figure's base must pass over to complete the movement action. The height is only counted once when moving up onto the terrain. It does not count as additional movement to move from the top of a piece of terrain downward, closer to the play surface.

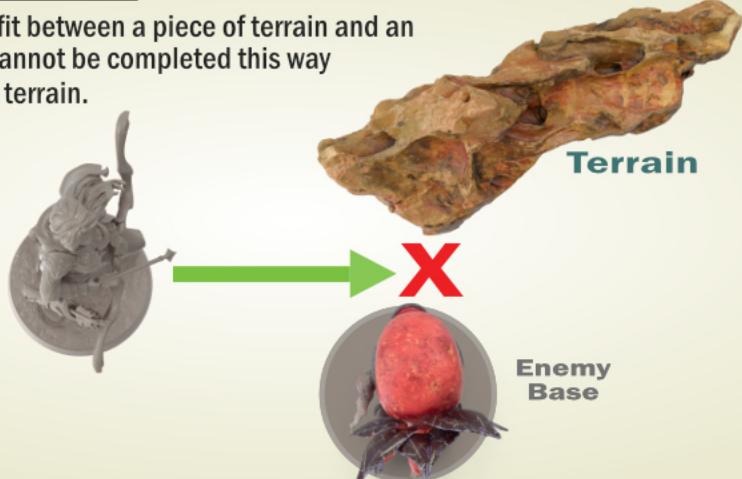
MOVEMENT EXAMPLE 1

Mira has a movement spec of 8 and can thus move 16 cm



MOVEMENT EXAMPLE 2

Mira's base diameter is too large to fit between a piece of terrain and an enemy figure's base thus the move cannot be completed this way because enemy bases are treated as terrain.



TAKING ACTIONS CONTINUED

Attack

Perform a standard attack against another figure within range. First check that the figure is in range and in line of sight of the attacking figure. A figure is considered to be within line of sight if a straight line can be drawn from any part of the attacking figure's base to any part of the target figure's base without passing through terrain or enemy bases. The height of a figure's base should not be considered in determining line of sight. Line of sight should be measured from where a figure's base meets the play surface.

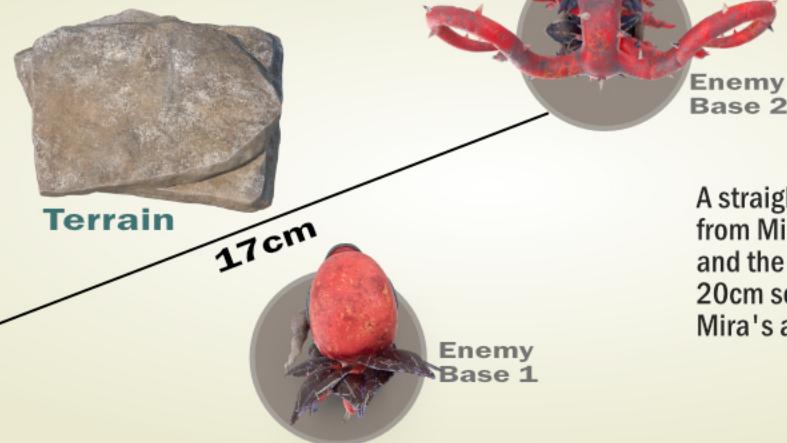
A figure is considered to be in range if the straight line of sight from the active figure's base to the target figure's base is within the attacking figure's range spec. If one figure is elevated due to being placed onto terrain then range is measured in three dimensions. Example: if the target figure is 12 cm away from the attacking figure, and the range of the attacking figure has a spec value of 15 then the target figure would be in range.

If the target figure is in range and within line of sight then the attacking player chooses any number of dice to roll with any number of sides on the dice chosen. The amount of damage dealt is equal to the sum of the value of those dice as long as it does not exceed the figure's force spec. If the sum of the rolled result is greater than the attacking figure's force value then the attack is considered a "miss" and no damage is dealt. Example: the force value of an attacking figure is 7, the attacking player chooses roll 2 D4. If anything other than both dice rolling a "4" occurs then the attack has a value of the sum of both dice.

If a figure's damage is ever greater than or equal to its hit points then it is defeated and removed from the play area. After an attack, if the figure is not defeated, the controlling player marks the number of damage on the damaged figure's spec sheet by filling in the number of hit point icons equal to the damage dealt.

ATTACKING EXAMPLE 1

Mira has a range spec of 20 and can thus attack a figure up to 20cm away.



A straight line of sight can be drawn from Mira's base to Enemy 2's base and the distance of that line is less than 20cm so Enemy 2 can be the target of Mira's attack.

Prepare

When a figure takes a prepare action then the player controlling that figure gains one Prep token (short for preparation token) and fills in an empty Prep icon on any figure's spec sheet. Prep tokens can be used at any time during a player's turn, on any figure they control. Prep tokens may be spent by the controlling player during any of their figure's activations, including the figure that initially took the prepare action. Spending a Prep token does not count as a action. Prep tokens do not need to be used on the figure in which the Prep token is marked but can be used on any figure. There is no limit to how many Prep tokens a player may have or use at one time. Prep tokens can be used in the following ways:

- Increase or decrease a rolled die by 2 (to the die's max or min value)
- Increase the value of a foraged die by 2 (to the die's maximum value)
- Move any figure the player using the prep token controls by 2 cm
- Remove 2 damage from any figure
- Increase a figure's attack range by 5cm on its next attack
- Ignore an immobilize keyword

PREP TOKEN ICONS

Unavailable

Available
Unused

Used



TAKING ACTIONS CONTINUED

Use An Ability

Dice gathered in the foraging phase of the game can be assigned to figures and used for their abilities. To perform an ability, remove any dice from the figure that are required by the ability and perform the ability as it is described in the "Figure Ability Types" section below. Each ability on a figure may be used more than once unless the ability is limited to one use. Abilities limited to one use will have "Limit 1" listed as a keyword.

Ability Card

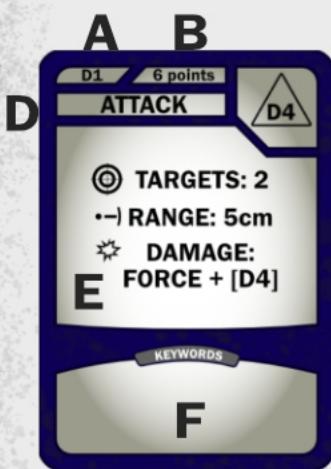


FIGURE ABILITY TYPES

Abilities are shown on a figures spec sheet as both text and card images. A single figure may have up to three abilities assigned to it. Descriptions of the ability types are below.

Attack

Attack abilities are intended to reduce the hit points of a target figure (typically an opponents figure but may also be on a players own figure). Attack abilities may have several properties such as:

Targets: the number of figures that the ability can affect

Range: the distance a target figure may be away from the figure using the ability

Damage: the amount that the ability can reduce a figures hit points.

Some abilities may have other properties that are described in that ability. If an ability does not list all of the properties above then the target is assumed to be 1 and range and force are equal to the figures base spec. The same rules for range and line of sight apply to attack abilities as they do to attack actions.

If an ability is referenced as a counter attack then the figure with the counter attack ability may perform an attack action after not being defeated by an opponent's attack. Regular range rules apply during a counter attack. The target of a counter attack may be any figure.

Defense

Defense abilities are intended to reduce the attack damage of an opponent's figure. When using a defense ability a player may either use a foraged die at face value or re-roll that foraged die and use the new result. The value of the die used for the ability is then subtracted from an attacking figures damage. The result after the subtraction is the amount of hit points the target figure must mark off on the figure's spec sheet (to a minimum of 0). If a defending die value is greater than an opponent figure's attack value the die must still be discarded.

Heal

Heal abilities are intended to recover hit points that a figure has lost. Hit point icons already marked on a figure's spec sheet may be either erased or additional ones may be added. A figure cannot gain hit points past the number it started the game with by using a heal action. A heal action may specify a range that the figure being healed must be within relative to the figure using the ability or a number of targets that the ability can be used on.

Melee

Melee abilities are a type of attack ability that always has a range of zero. In order to use these abilities, the figure using the ability must be in base contact with the figure that is the target of the ability.

Mine

Mines are a type of attack ability that damages any figure within 5 cm of the mine. The location of a mine is marked by placing the foraged die required for the ability onto the play area. Mine abilities will dictate where that die can be placed relative to the figure using the ability.

Detonation - Mines can be either passive or active. Passive mines detonate whenever a figure ends its movement within 5 cm of the mine or a figure is pushed or pulled within 5 cm of the mine. Active mines can be detonated by any figure of the player controlling the mine by using 1 action. When a mine detonates standard attack rules apply, including line of sight. Damage from mines is applied before any rush or chain rush abilities.

FORAGED DIE SYMBOLS

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| [D4] = Foraged die at face value | [D4] = Discarded die |
| [(D4)] = Foraged die rolled | [X] = Foraged die of X value |
| (D4) = Rolled die, not foraged | |

FIGURE ABILITY TYPES

CONTINUED

Misc.

Miscellaneous abilities don't fall into one of the other listed categories and the specifics of the ability will be described on the ability card.

Move

Move abilities add extra movement distance while a figure is being moved across the play area. The value of a forged die is added to the unit's movement spec. Since each spec point added to a figure is worth 2cm of movement the extra movement in cm is twice the value of the die. When using a movement ability, the same rules apply as taking a standard move action but with the extra distance applied.

Prep

Prep abilities utilize prep tokens instead of forged dice. These abilities can modify what prep tokens can be used for or trigger an effect when a prep token is used. Prep abilities do not require using an action.

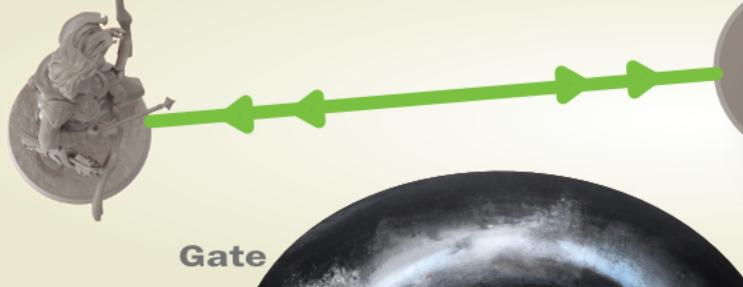
Push Pull

Push pull abilities allow other figures in the game to be moved relative to the figure using the ability. The target for a push pull ability must always be a figure other than the figure using the ability and the figure may belong to either player.

During a push pull ability, the target figure is either moved away from or moved toward the figure using the ability. The distance that the figure is moved by is dictated by the value of the forged die used for that ability. Unlike movement abilities, this value is not multiplied by 2.

The direction of the target figure's movement must be along an imaginary line that runs through the center of both the target figure's base and the base of the figure using the ability. Figures cannot be pushed or pulled in any direction other than along this imaginary line. Figures may not be pushed or pulled onto or through terrain or other bases.

PUSH PULL EXAMPLE



END GAME

The game ends when no figures have actions left to be used. After all figure's have used their action, the winner of the game is the player with the highest number of figures whose bases are touching the gate. If players have the same number of figure's touching the gate then the player whose figure's spec points added together is the highest is the winner. If neither player has any figures touching the gate at the end of the game then neither player is the winner.

KEYWORDS

All

All figures, belonging to any player.

Immobile

Figure gaining the immobile keyword from an ability can never take the move action after using the ability. This figure may still be pushed or pulled by other figures.

Immobilize

A figure that was affected by an Immobilize attack cannot move on their next activation, Resistible. (See page 8 for more on the Resistible keyword)

Limit 1

This ability may only be used by this figure once per game, regardless if the figure has additional forged dice that would meet the abilities requirements.

Multiple Targets

If an ability specifies multiple targets, all of those targets must be in line of sight when the ability action is chosen. Example: If one figure is blocking line of sight from a second figure, the second figure cannot be the target of the ability even if the first figure is defeated or moved while using the ability.



The imaginary push pull line is shown in green. It runs through the center of Mira's base as well as the center of the target's base.

KEYWORDS CONTINUED

Recurring

May repeat the action as many times as desired and is possible, all during the same action

Ref

Indicates that additional information about the ability can be found in the ability guide.

Resistible

The defending player may roll dice with the same rules as an attack (using their force value). This is called a resist roll. If the resist roll is greater than the forged die value that the attacker used to activate the ability then the ability has no effect. Any '+' or '-' value after the "Resistible" keyword is a modifier to the defending player's force roll.

Rush

This ability can be used at the end of a movement action without using an additional action.

Chain Rush

Chain rush indicates an action that can be used in the middle of a movement action. Chain rush can be used multiple times on different opponent figures throughout a movement. A single chain rush action cannot target the same figure twice.

Sneak

Figure may pass through enemy figure bases when moving. A figure with sneak may not end its movement overlapping another base

Spray

After an attack deals damage to a figure, the specified spray damage is dealt to any figure within the specified spray range of the defending figure.

MISCELLANEOUS RULES

Measuring - A player may measure distances on the board at any time during their turn, in any phase of the game.

Balancing on terrain - If a figure cannot balance on a piece of terrain without falling off, then it cannot end its movement in that location. These rules suggest etiquette of no more than two balancing attempts before choosing a different location to end that figure's movement action.

CREDITS

Dustin Vance

Game Design

Graphic Design

Web Design

Ian Arthur (@Penandlongsword)

Artist - Paper Miniatures

Special thanks to the following for their assistance with the game's development:

Dave Celeskey

James Bishop

Jack Pierce

REVISION LOG

January 2023 - V0.20 - Released for beta testing

January 22 2023 - V0.21 - Logo change, clarified range, push pull mine detonation, and prep actions.

February 3 2023 - V0.22 - Added rules for measuring and minimum base diameter

March 17 2023 - V0.23 - Updated diagram images and map

April 14 2023 - V0.24 - Added paper minis, clarified chain rush targets, changed terrain rules for no contact, added reference card, counter attack targeting, added decrease rolled die to prep abilities.

May 9th, 2023 - V.025 - Misc. editing.

September 5th, 2023 - V0.26 - Added FAQ question 1

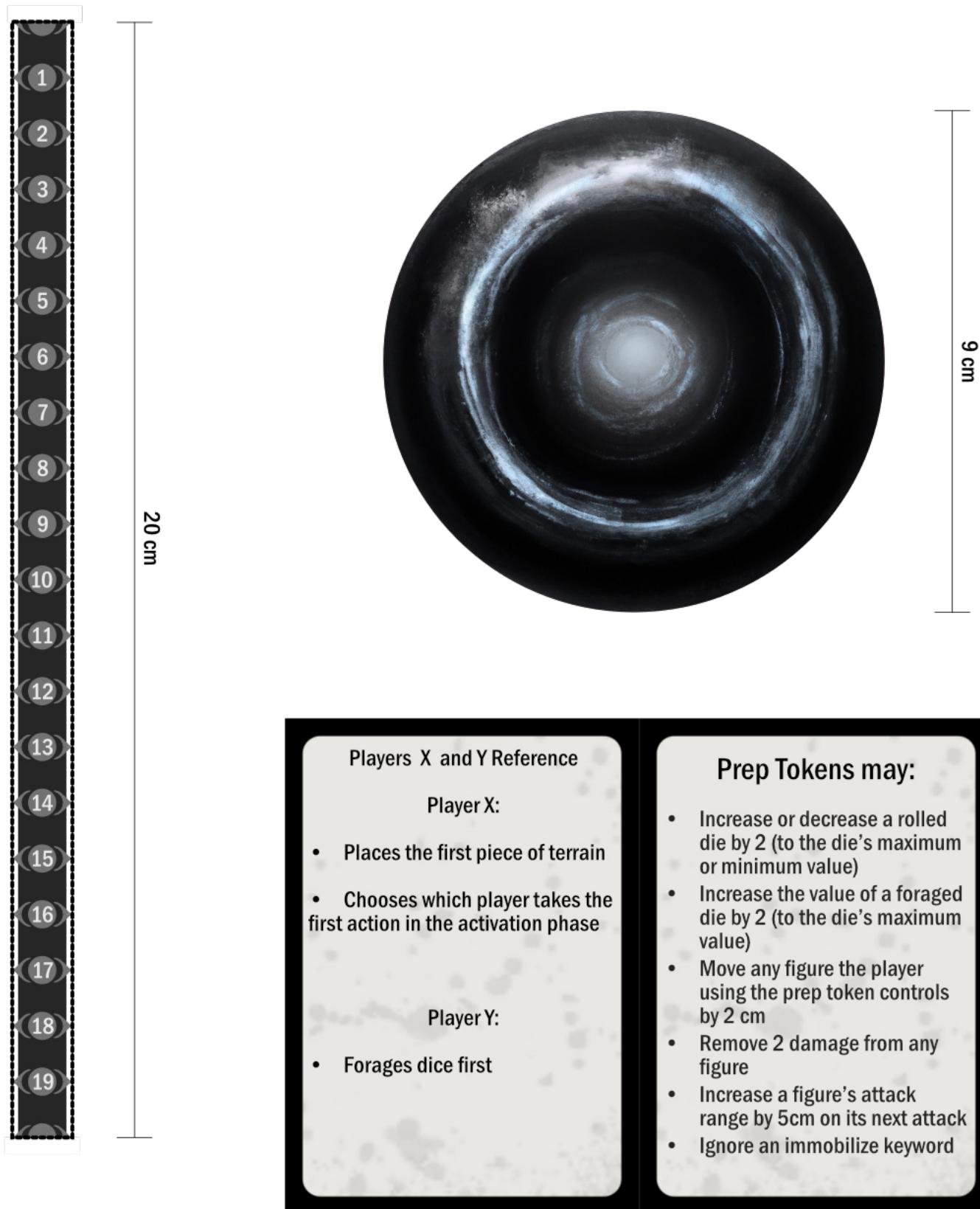
F A Q

Question 1: When an ability instructs a player to reduce a die by a certain value, can that die be under the opposite player's control?

Answer: No, a player may never manipulate a foraged die under their opponent's control.

APPENDIX 1: PRINTABLE COMPONENTS

Components in this section are intended to provide players some basic items required to play Ephemeral Path such as a 9cm gate, a range ruler in centimeters (cm), and 40cm x 40cm play area. These components are not required and other suitable components may be used if the players wish. After printing, it is important to make sure that the dimensions of the components are correct.



PRINTABLE PLAY AREA MAP

SECTION 1

20 cm



PRINTABLE PLAY AREA MAP

SECTION 2

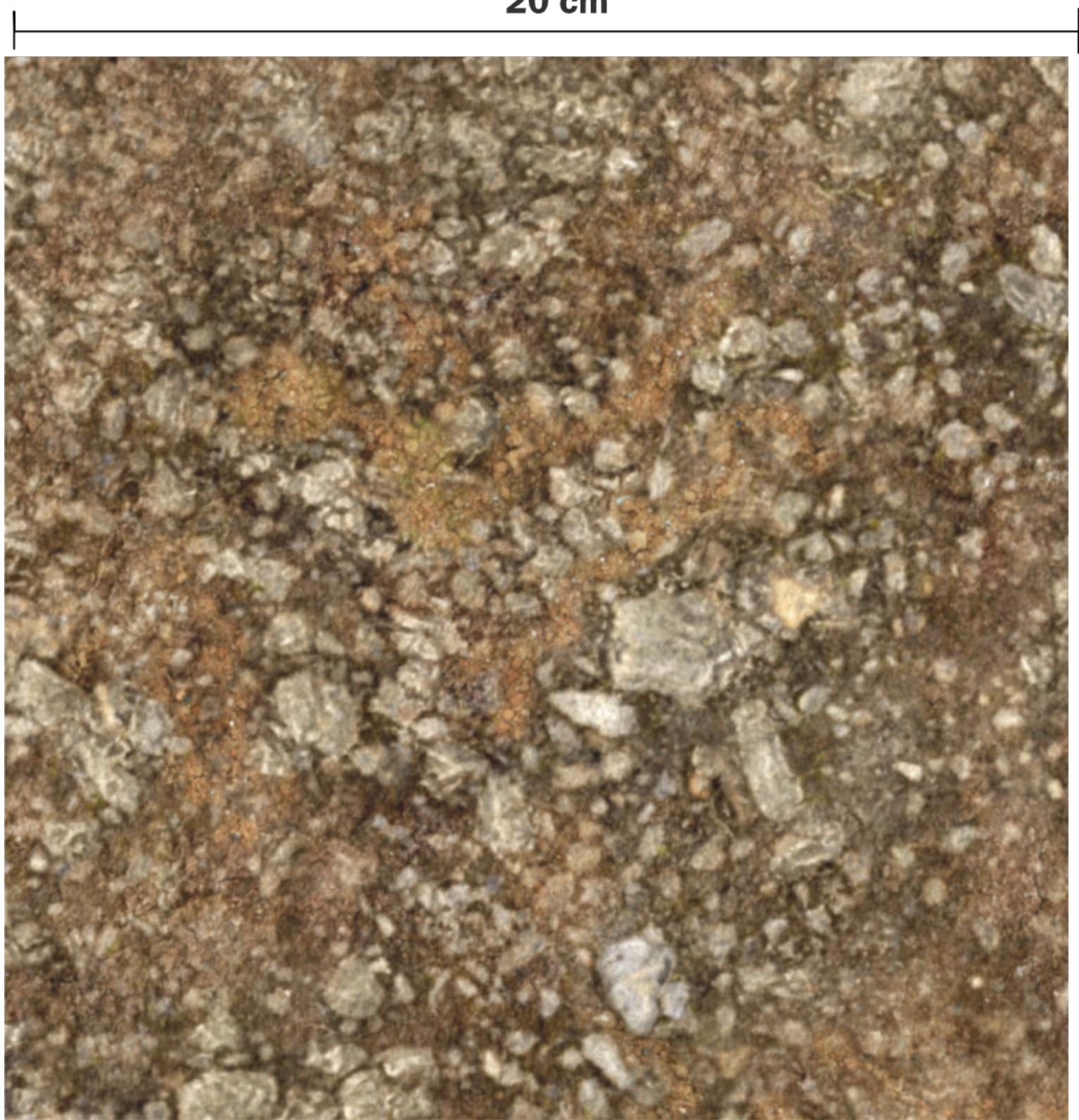
20 cm



PRINTABLE PLAY AREA MAP

SECTION 3

20 cm



PRINTABLE PLAY AREA MAP

SECTION 4

20 cm



PRINTABLE TERRAIN

Although the rules of Ephemeral Path assume that the terrain used within the game has some height to it (even if that height is minimal) this printable terrain may still be used by assuming the height listed on the terrain applies to the entire piece evenly. For example, whenever a figure's base would pass over any part of the terrain, the player must add the listed height of that terrain to the figure's movement.



PRINTABLE MINIATURES

These miniatures can be printed out on card stock and are fully compatible with Ephemeral Path. Cut along the lines between figures and fold along the lines separating the figures front and back. Fold where the gray base meets the white background and then glue the halves together, excluding the base.



Art By : Ian Arthur (@Penandlongsword)