

Square On Sale

For 3-4 players / Duration: 60min. / for ages 10 and older.

You are land sharks. You can buy/raid anyone's squares anytime through auctions. Of course you have to acquire as many (good) sites as possible to become the winner. Bubble economics forever.

In this game, players aim to bid off places as good timing as possible. The main idea of this game is simultaneity of auctions -- unlike ordinal auction games that new auction begins only after current auction ends, in this game you can begin new auction for any place at any time regardless of auctions in process. As a result, there are 2 or more auctions in process at any time, but a player cannot bid in 2 or more auctions at once, so you may miss chances of bid, or you might bid off worthless place because situations are changing by other auctions while you are joining the auction.

0. Outline of the game

This is a game of auctions. Spend your money in auctions to get good places (or "take over" good places -- in this game, auction can be held without a permission of the owner of the place, and when the auction ends the owner simply lose the place without any payoff) and build (or extend) a high building on the place.

In this game, each player takes turns clockwise. On your turn, you will do following things.

- Some of your chips (money) spent in auctions are returned to you.
- If your previous bid is not outbid in some turns (1 or 2 turns), you win the auction and get a place. Put your building block on the place. (When there are someone's building blocks on the place, put your block on top of that. The color on the top shows the current owner.)
 - If there is another place of yours in the same line as the place you bided off, you can raid places between them.
- Select a place and bid for the place. If no one is bidding for the place now, it will be the beginning of new auction. If someone is bidding for the place, you must outbid him/her.

The game ends when someone puts all of his/her building blocks, or when a building is built on all of spaces. The player who owns many high buildings will win.

1. Materials

- 25 tiles
 - Lay out them as fig.1. These tiles become a game board.
 - This "game board" shows 25 spaces (5 * 5). The board is separated into 3 parts: first part is named CORNER (consist of 4 spaces); second one is EDGE (3 * 4 = 12 spaces) and finally CENTER (3 * 3 = 9 spaces).

- Money chips in 4 colors (20 each)
 - Chips are used as money for buying spaces in the game board.
- Building blocks in 4 colors (20 x 3 colors + 17 x 1 color)
 - Each player places his/her building blocks on a space to show that the space is his/her space.
- 8 dice
 - Dice show who and when bided for which space.
- 30 beans
 - Bonus points.

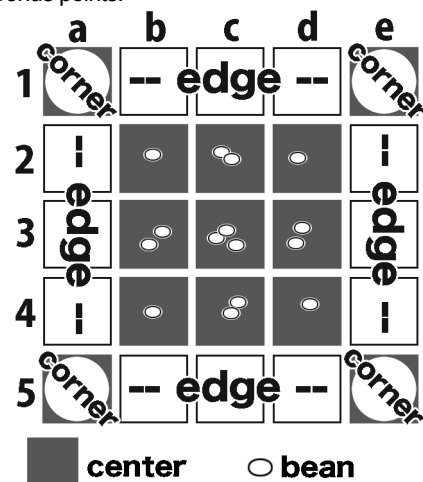


Fig.1 The game board

2. Preparation

- Lay out 25 tiles as fig.1 on a table to make a game board.
- Each player sits around the table.
- Each player chooses a color, takes all 20 chips of his/her color, and put in front of him/her. Putting items in front of a player means he/she has them.
- Each player takes building blocks of your color and put in front of him/her.
 - With 3 players, take 20 blocks each.
 - With 4 players, take 17 blocks each.
 - Remaining building blocks are not used in a game.
- Put 15 beans as fig.1 shows [3 beans on c3, 2 beans on c2, b3, c4 and d3, 1 bean on b2, b4, d4, d2].

- Set remaining 15 beans and all 8 dice beside the board. We call them "the pool".
- Select the first turn player.

3. Course of the game

Each player takes turns clockwise. On his/her turn, a player must do following processes in written order.

1. Collecting chips from center spaces of the game board
2. Removing dice, and putting building blocks
3. Taking one action from 2 following alternatives:
 - A) Bidding
 - B) Collecting chips from edge spaces of the board
4. Putting a bean

3.1. Collecting chips from center spaces

In your turn, you can (and you must) collect 1 chip of your color from each of 9 center spaces.

(As we describe below, when you win an auction for a space, you put your chips on the space as a payment for the space. So "collecting chips" means that you can get back your money little by little.)

(Note: you can collect a chip from each of "center spaces", not "your stacks in center spaces. So, regardless of the number of stacks in a space, you can get only 1 chip from there.)

If there is a die on top of a stack of your chips, you cannot collect a chip from the stack.

(Because this stack shows not the payment but the fact that you are bidding for the space below the stack.)

Of course, if there is no your chip on a space, you cannot collect a chip from the space.

Example: See Fig.2. This figure shows white player's chips on game board. All chips (and dice) of other players, all blocks, and all beans are omitted to simplify the figure (they are nothing to do with collecting white player's chips). In a beginning of white player's turn, white player get a chip of his/her color from b2, d2, c3, d3. So he/she gets total of 4 chips. In d2, he/she must take a chip from the stack without a die. In b2, he/she can choose from which stack he/she take a chip (The choice is nothing to do with the game).

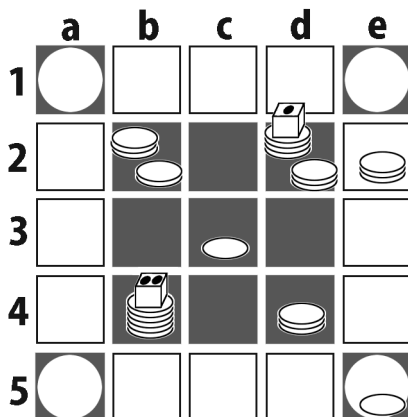


Fig. 2

3.2. Removing markers and putting building blocks

If there is a stack of your chips that have a die on the top, and the die is facing [1] side up, you must remove the die and do [putting blocks] process. See 3.2.1 for the detail.

(As we describe below, this means you won an auction for the space.)

If there is a stack of your chips that have a die on the top, and the die is facing [2] side up, you must wheel the die so that [1] side faces up. (In this case, you cannot put building blocks.)

When the process of removing a die and putting blocks for a stack ends, he must do the same process for another of your stack with a dice (if there is). You must do the process for all of your stacks with a die (You can choose the processing order).

You must not do the process for 2 stacks at a time. You must finish the process for a stack before you begin the process for another stack.

3.2.1. Putting blocks

If there was a die that is facing [1] side up on top of your stack of chips, by removing the die, now the stack has no dice. This means the fact that just now you won an auction for the space on which the stack is.

In this case, if you have a building block, you can (and you must) place one of your blocks on the place.

If there is a stack of blocks on the space, you place your block on top of the stack of blocks. The color of the top block shows who owns the space now.

(As described below, the height of the stack of blocks shows the value of the space.)

If there are some beans on the space, you can (and you must) take all of the beans and put in front of you.

(Beans become bonus points when the game ends.)

After putting a block on the space you won (we call it "the newly purchased space"), you can (and you must) put blocks on other spaces. If there is another space of your own (we call it "a space of yours") in the same horizontal, vertical or diagonal line, and all spaces between the newly purchased space and the space of yours are owned by some other players, then you can (and you must) place one of your building blocks on top of the stack of blocks on each of other players' space between the newly purchased space and the space of yours.

If 2 or more spaces of yours fulfill above condition, you can (and you must) do above process for each of the space of yours.

(This process may sound difficult, but it is similar to the flipping process of "Reversi". The major difference is that you place your new blocks instead of turn over existing tiles.)

When you exhaust building blocks to place, you cannot place

any more blocks. In this case, you must place on the newly purchased place first. For the rest spaces, you can set the placing order as you like.

Example: see Fig. 3-A. It is beginning of White's turn, just before removing dice / putting block(s). White has 2 alternatives – [1. removing a die on d4 first], and [2. removing a die on e3 first].

When white choose [1. d4 first], the result is Fig.3-B. First, removing a die on d4, and white wins the auction on d4. White gets all 2 beans on d4 and places his/her building block. Next, white places his/her building block on top of d2, d3, b2, and c3 each. And then white removes a marker on e3, places his/her building block on e3, then e2.

When white choose [2. e3 first], the result is Fig.3-C. First, removing a die on e3, and white wins the auction on e3 so he/she places his/her block on e3. Next, white places his/her building block on top of b3, c3, d3 and e2. And then white removes a die on d4, get all beans on d4, and places his/her building block on d4.

White can choose from these 2 alternatives.

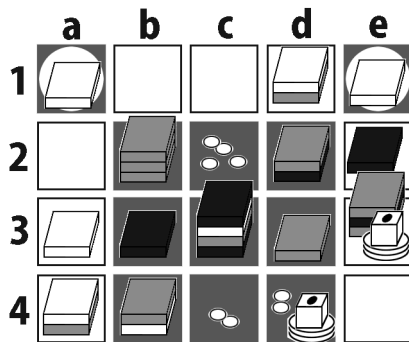


Fig. 3-A

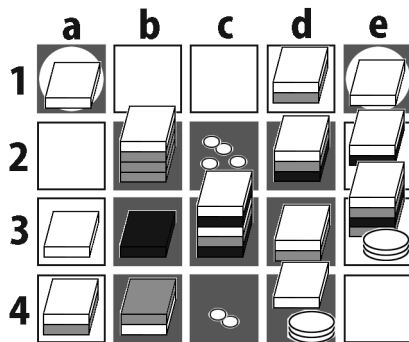


Fig. 3-B

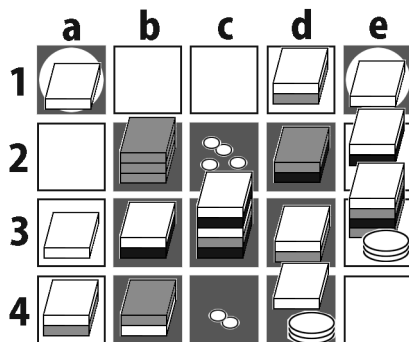


Fig. 3-C

3.3. Actions

3.3.1. Bidding

If you select "bidding", then you must select a space and bid a price for the space. You can choose the target from spaces that blocks (some other player's or yours) are already placed on. Of course you can choose one from "empty" spaces, too.

Declare your bid. Then make a stack with the same number of your chips as your bid, and put the stack of your chips on the space of your select. And then take a die from the pool and put them on the stack of your chips, with facing [2] side up. Dice show the player who is the current high bidder of the auction for the place, and the height of the stack with a dice means the price of the bid.

If there is already a stack with a die on a space you want to bid for, it means that the owner of the stack of chips is the current high bidder of the auction for the space. So you must outbid him/her. To outbid, you must bid higher price than the opponent's. If you outbid, the chips (the stack) of the former high bidder is returned to its owner. And in this case, put the die that was on the stack of the former high bidder on your new stack, without changing the face. (So, if the die was facing [1] side up on the former high bidder's stack, it still faces [1] side up on your new stack, too).

(Note: when you bid, there may be stacks – of your color or of some opponent – without dice on the place you want. These have nothing to do with your bid. The only thing you have to consider is the stack with a die on the place.)

You cannot outbid yourself (it means that, if there is already your stack of chips with a die on a space, you cannot bid new price for the place).

Example: See fig.4. Suppose that it is white player's turn, and it is action phase now. White cannot bid a price for c5, because white is already high bidder in auction for c5. If white want to get d2, he/she must bid 2 or more chips to outbid black (and when white outbid black, the chips of black is returned to black, and black can use them again). If white want to get e5, he/she must bid 8 or more chips (not "5 or more chips", because you cannot use a stack of your color on e5). When white outbids gray, 7 chips of gray are returned to gray player, and s/he can use them again for later auctions. And if white outbid gray, The die on top of new white stack faces [1] side up. For all other spaces (even for a2 or e3), white can bid even from 1 chip (in these case, he/she begins new auction).

When you've forgotten processes of the game...

Sometimes you will forget some processes like collecting chips or removing dice. These processes (and other processes) are mandatory so you shouldn't forget them, but even so you may forget. We have a rule when you forget some processes.

If some player (incl. you) notice it and point out before the next player starts "removing marker/putting blocks" process, you must rewind the situation. After that, no one can rewind the situation.

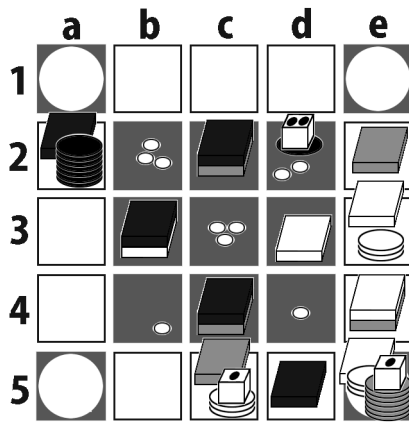


Fig.4

3.3.2. Collecting chips from edge spaces

If you choose "collecting chips from edges", then you can (and you must) collect 1 chip of your color from each of 12 edge spaces.

The detail of rule is as same as the rule of collecting chips from center spaces. See 3.1.

You can choose this action even if there are no your chips on edge spaces. In this case you do nothing.

3.4. Putting a bean

In the end of your turn, you must take a bean from the pool and put it on one of the "empty" center spaces of your choice. "Empty" means that, there are neither blocks nor a stack with a die on the space.

If there are no beans in the pool, then you cannot put a bean.

If there are no "empty" center spaces, then you cannot put a bean.

4. End of the game

If, in the end of your turn, one of following 3 conditions is satisfied, the game ends.

- You have no building blocks in front of you.
- There are block(s) on all of 25 spaces.
- Turn players choose "collecting chips from edges" for [the number of players × 2] turns in a row. (Very rare case. In most cases you don't have to consider this condition.)

All auctions in process remain unsolved.

5. Scoring

When the game ends, count your score by following rules.

- If you are the owner of some spaces, for each of your spaces you get points as same as the number of blocks on the space.

- If you have beans, add 1 point for each bean.
- If you have unused building blocks in front of you, subtract 1 point for each unused building blocks. Because of this rule, your total score may become less than zero.

(Note: chips are worthless in scoring.)

The player with the highest score wins. There is no tiebreaker.

Example: See fig.5. It is the end of a game (this figure doesn't show chips and dice, because they have nothing to do with scoring).

White owns c1 (2pts), d1 (2pts), e1 (1pt), b2 (3pts), d2 (2pts), e2 (2pts), d3 (5pts), and e3 (1pt). And white has 5 beans (5pts).

He/she has no building blocks left, so no penalty. White's total score is 23points.

Black owns a1 (1pt), c2 (4pts), b3 (5pts), c3 (5pts), b4 (6pts), d4 (1pt), and b5 (3pts). Black has 7 beans, so he/she gets additional 7 points. He/she has a building block, so 1 point is subtracted from total score. Black's total score is 31points.

Gray has a2 (1pt), a3 (2pts), a4 (3pts), c4 (3pts), a5 (2pts), c5 (1pt), and 5 beans (5pts). He/she has 3 building blocks, so 3 points are subtracted from total score. His/her total score is 14points.

Thus, black wins.

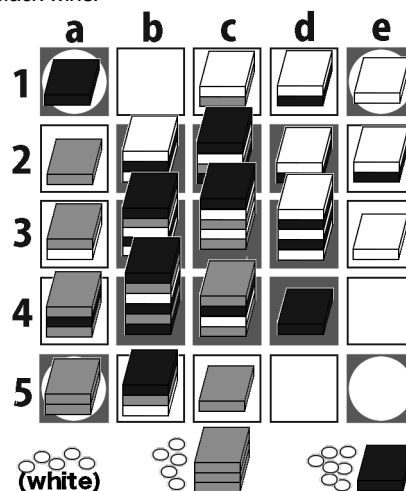


Fig.5

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