

Tom Lehmann

Dice Realms

Player Guide

INTRODUCTION

Dice Realms is a game of crafting dice to improve and expand your realm, initially consisting of two customizable dice.

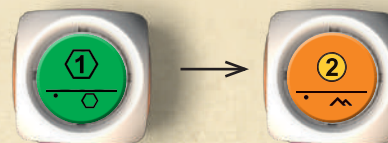
Have you ever rolled a die and wished that you could alter its sides to have more faces with the result you want? That's *exactly* what you can do with a customizable die!

For example, if you need more coins, then by swapping for a second ② coins face, you double the odds that this die rolls a ② coins result. Since *Dice Realms* gives you one free reroll each turn, you're now better than 50% to roll — or reroll — a ② coins face on that die *every turn*.

Put a third ② coins face on that die (and spend your reroll when needed) and you're now 75% to roll a ② coins face *every turn*. That's the magic of dice specialization!

Dice crafting games differ from deck building games as a die face can possibly be rolled every turn, unlike a card that can only show up once each time you go through your deck.

Of course, during a game, you'll want different things: upgrades, coins, grain, defense, victory points, and whichever special faces that are key to your winning strategy. Shifting among different dice specializations during play is part of *Dice Realms*' skill.



CONTENTS

You can learn how to specialize your dice during play or, if you prefer, pages 4-6 of this guide will take you through a detailed example.

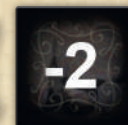
- Pages 2 & 3  present other key elements of *Dice Realms*.
- Page 7  describes the **cooperative** game, where players contend with an invader's attacks every round, while helping each other to defend and beat the invader's score.
- Page 8  details two different **solo** variants: one similar to the cooperative game where you face an invader; and one where you race against time.
- Page 9  presents two cooperative (or solo) mini-campaigns, where each game's result feeds into the next game's setup.
- Pages 10-11  discuss the history behind the design of *Dice Realms*.
- Page 12  lists new tile setups, designed especially for solo and cooperative games. **Enjoy!**



ABOUT THE GAME

THE GRAIN TIGHTROPE

Grain is a two-edged sword in *Dice Realms*. Grain is needed to buy more dice and stave off *misery*: if you have too little grain when Winter is rolled on the Fate die, you take 1 misery (–2 VPs) for each grain you are short.



However, if the players *collectively* produce more grain than is in the supply, representing grain rotting in the fields, then the game ends. This can happen quite abruptly, especially if new players, scared of possibly taking misery, overproduce grain.

The recommended first set of dice faces includes the Gardener, which may convert 1 grain to 2 VP chips when rolled (before rerolling that die). If you have excess grain, investing in a Gardener face on each of your dice can help keep the game from ending or enable you to be ahead on VPs if it does end quickly.



When examining what die faces are on offer, note any faces that can convert grain to VPs (such as the Gardener, Banker, or the Merchant face of the Grain Trade line) or which reward stockpiling grain (the Holdings line).



A Bad Harvest face is always on the Fate die. Whenever it is rolled, consider using its grain conversion power both to manage any excess grain you have and to possibly buy another die.



If you are ahead on VPs (from both VP chips and upgraded faces), triggering a grain ending can be a winning move. A Banker face (which can convert any amount of coins, grain, and VP chips into each other) and set-a-die tokens can often enable you to force a grain ending. With two Banker faces, you can first use one to convert everything into grain to end the game and then the second to convert everything back into VP chips.



At the other extreme, if you are ahead on VPs and the other players have very little grain, investing in grain attacks (on the Grain Robber or Pillage line) may end the game by producing more misery than there is in the supply!



SET-A-DIE TOKENS AND COMBINATIONS

New players often undervalue set-a-die tokens. These cost 4 coins but can enable large scoring combinations (especially with the Cattle, Holdings, or Nobles lines); help control the game pace; and provide defense (Hero, Town) if needed. Typically, you want at least 1 set-a-die token to use in the final round.



The “great cattle round-up” illustrates the power of set-a-die tokens. This combo of 3 dice, 3 Cattle faces, and 3 set-a-die tokens provides 3 grain and 12 VPs every round, since the 12 coins it produces buys 3 new set-a-die tokens, removing any need to actually *roll* these Cattle faces!



UPGRADES vs DICE

New players often begin by upgrading their Tinker faces to Smith faces, as doing this doubles their upgrades when these faces are rolled. This seems more efficient than upgrading their initial Prospector to Miner faces, which is only a 50% increase in coins.

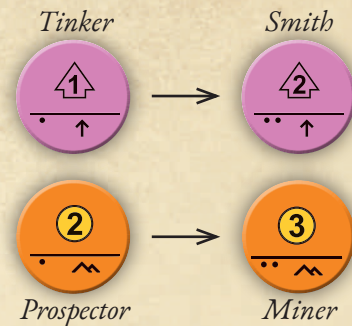
However, coins are far more flexible as they can be spent on upgrades or to buy more dice and, later, set-a-die tokens to power your combos and control the game pace.

Further, concentrating on more upgrades often leads players to roll and upgrade more faces, resulting in their two initial dice — despite their improved faces — not being able to produce enough coins to buy additional dice. This approach generally loses to a player who invests in coin faces and rapidly gets to a third and then more dice.

Having more dice lets you do more and often leads to more VPs. Many winning positions have more VPs from upgraded faces than from VP *chips*. Each die you own is a potential “VP platform”.

Within the same line, spending two upgrades to improve two 1-dot faces to 2-dot faces, worth 1 VP apiece, is twice as efficient (from a VP standpoint) than spending two upgrades to go from one 2-dot face to a 4-dot face, which gains only 1 VP.

Specializing one of your two initial dice for upgrades and the other one for coins will generally enable you to get a third die fairly quickly while still improving your faces.



THE ROLE OF ATTACKS

Attacks in *Dice Realms* serve two purposes: Fate die attacks (Robber, Plague, etc.) are challenges for players to overcome, while in games whose setups include a tile with attack faces, player attacks allow players who are behind to pressure the leader.



Consider a game where one player is able to buy a third die on their first turn, spending 2 of their 3 starting grain. This is a bit risky, but if Winter isn't rolled before they earn more grain, that player is now ahead and can easily buy more dice.

If Grain Robbers are available, another player can invest in them to try to deprive the leader of grain, preventing them from buying more dice (as each die costs 5 coins *and* 2 grain) and possibly causing them misery, either directly or indirectly when Winter is rolled.



For this reason, the Grain Robber is included in the recommended first set of tiles. However, some groups may prefer not to play with player attacks. Here's an alternative that swaps the Patron and Shrine for the Grain Robber and Hero.

Alternative First Game Tiles (no player attacks):
Gardener, *Patron*, Plow Team, *Shrine*, Steward



These groups may also enjoy the co-op game (see page 7), where players cannot attack each other but instead can help each other defend against the Invader die attacks and win or lose together as a team.

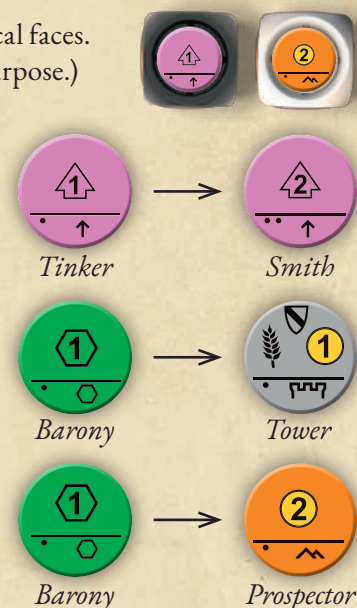


SPECIALIZING YOUR DICE

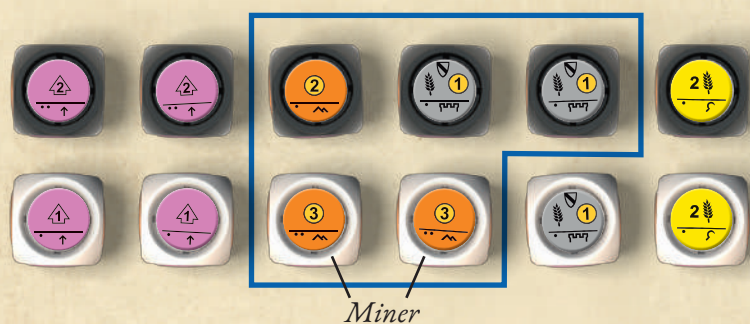
Each player's realm initially consists of two dice, one black and one white, with identical faces. (The different die colors are to remind you which die has been specialized for what purpose.)

Most of the time (~85%), you should have 2 upgrades (△) in the first round if you reroll to get either △ or ② on both dice (if you roll one Tower face, you combine its ① with your treasury coin for an upgrade). Upgrade both Tinker faces to Smith faces on, say, your black die.

Next round, cross-grade the Barony face on one die to a second Tower face, creating a die specialized for defense. If the only attack is the Fate Die Robber, do this on your black "upgrade" die (as defense won't often be needed). If you expect to defend often (in the co-op game, versus player attacks, or if Plague is present), do this on your white die, planning to upgrade these Tower faces to Towns for double shields and 2 coins. Otherwise, cross-grade the Barony face on the white die to a Prospector, planning to upgrade two Prospectors to Miners next turn.



In a low attack game after three rounds, your dice might have faces as shown at right. If you roll a Miner on your white die, you can reroll the black die for either a Prospector or a Tower (spending a treasury coin) to buy a die for 2 grain and 5 coins. If not, continue to upgrade these dice.



In a high attack game after three rounds, specialized dice might look as shown. To buy a third die, you need to roll both your Prospector and Town faces *and* have a treasury coin (plus 2 grain).



In either case — since 2 coins can be spent for an upgrade — you are not sacrificing much in upgrades to create a real chance of quickly getting a third die.

While two defense faces and a free reroll is better than 50% to roll a defense face, at 56% it is not reliable. Three specialized faces, a free reroll, and using a reroll token (if needed) is 88% and four faces is even better (94%). In a high attack game, you'll want to replace more faces on the white die with Town faces.

Alternatively, if tiles with reroll faces are present, two (different) reroll faces has the same effect as adding two more specialized faces, for *both* pairs of faces on that die.



The die at right steadily generates upgrades while still being very likely to roll a defense when needed.



Usually, the first die you buy will be a gray die which you will specialize for grain and something else in order to be able to make grain when you need it and otherwise do something useful, such as additional upgrades.

Here is an example of three dice in a low attack game with a single reroll face, the Diplomat, that can reliably generate upgrades, coins, and grain, plus defense when needed, as well as more dice and a trickle of VP chips.



Their upgraded faces are currently worth 17 VPs. Only eight faces have been *cross-graded* to achieve these specializations.

The most efficient way to generate VPs is to upgrade 1-dot faces (worth no VPs) to 2-dot faces in the same lines (worth 1 VP). Every time you switch out of a line by cross-grading to another line for 1 upgrade instead of upgrading that face from 1-dot to 2-dot (1 upgrade), you effectively lose 1 VP.

This is why you do not build dice whose faces are all coins or grain or upgrades, as each such die would involve 5 cross-grades. Instead, you want to specialize your dice just enough to achieve reliable results and buy new dice to serve both as upgrade platforms for more VPs and new dice to specialize (as done for grain in the example above).

In the example above, we haven't yet upgraded the two purple Tinker faces on the white die to Smith faces. That is because the white die's specialized purpose is roll coins and we will reroll away from those Tinker faces to try to get coins (particularly if we either have a coin in our treasury or have a Tower face showing on the black die and can get to another die if we reroll the white die to a 4 coins Mine face). When we have "spare" upgrades, we will upgrade either those Tinker faces or the Tower faces on the black die to 2-dot faces (for cheap VPs), but doing so is not a priority.

At this point, we might consider buying green dice instead of additional gray dice to start transitioning towards earning VP chips (as well as VPs for upgraded faces) to win. We can also consider what faces will be our *key* faces, those that we want to roll to win.

Suppose Stewards (which upgrade green Lands faces to their top level) are available and we have bought at least 1 green die, upgraded those Tinkers on the white die to Stewards, and upgraded one Tower face on the black die to a City face.

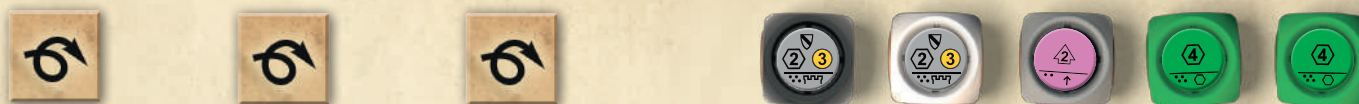


These dice now quickly earn VPs, either by rolling City faces and green Lands faces to earn VP *chips* or via cheap upgrades of the green die's 1-dot green Barony faces to 2-dot County faces or, when Stewards are rolled, by turning them into 4-dot Dukedom faces. If coins are rolled, buy a second green die or set-a-die tokens for the final round.

If we have got a second green die, used Stewards to put at least one Dukedom on each of our two green dice, and have bought, say, three set-a-die tokens, then as the common VP chip pool dwindles, we are ready for the final turn.



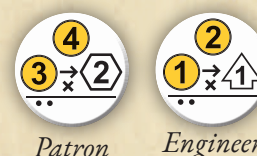
If we roll (or reroll) either a City or Dukedom face on our black, white, or two green dice, we can use our three set-a-die tokens to set the black and white die to City faces and the green dice to Dukedom faces and reroll the grain die to get 2 upgrades (we should have plenty of reroll tokens from our Mine faces).



This earns 14 VPs in chips, plus 5 upgrades to take any remaining 1-dot faces to 2-dots.

In this example, besides the Diplomat reroll faces, we shifted to faces on offer (the Steward) after getting our dice specialized and buying additional dice. What is on offer can dramatically affect how you specialize your dice.

For example, if a Patron (a cheaper way than upgrading Commerce faces to Mines to get a 4 coins face) or an Engineer (better than Progress faces for generating upgrades when combined with other coins faces) is on offer, you might shift to those faces very early and develop your dice quite differently.



This is particularly true when considering faces that combine off of each other, such as Cattle or Nobles. In those cases, you want to reserve “slots” on your dice to eventually have those faces and generate set-die-tokens to ensure that your combination will occur.

For example, in a set with Cattle and without any reroll faces, you might upgrade your dice as shown. The idea is to get a third die quickly and a couple of set-a-die tokens, using 1-dot Cattle faces for grain production. Only 6 cross-grades (and lots of upgrades) are needed.



Then upgrade the cattle faces and use rerolls and set-a-die tokens to set all three dice to their cattle faces (as shown in the next diagram).

At this point, you have created the “great cattle round-up” (see page 2), earning 12 VPs in chips each round and 12 coins to rebuy 3 set-a-die tokens (plus 3 grain for Winters). Repeat this until you drain the common pool of VP chips.



If you roll one of your Cattle faces, you buy just 2 set-die-tokens and use the spare 4 coins to upgrade two 1-dot faces to 2-dots.

Dice specialization, quickly buying more dice, and using both rerolls and set-a-die tokens effectively, plus a careful consideration of what faces are on offer when formulating your strategy for a game, should enable you to play in a more purposeful and less “hopeful” manner, better able to control your fate despite the randomness of die rolls as you rule your realm in an ever-changing environment. **Good Luck!**



COOPERATIVE and SOLO PLAY

The co-op game adds an Invader which attacks all players every round and gains victory points. Players can help defend each other, transfer grain, and coordinate their play to meet the goal: have every player outscore the Invader at game end.

Setup. Select a difficulty and put the faces, from the Pillage and War lines, on the supplied extra red die* (not the Fate die) to form the Invasion die. Set up the common VP pool as shown. (See tables.) Setup the rest of the supply normally.

Invasion Die Face Setup

	Pillage			War		
	Looter	Pillager	Invader	Soldier	Knight	Catapult
Difficulty						
Easy	1	1	1	1	1	1
Medium	0	2	1	0	2	1
Hard	0	1	2	0	1	2

*A second red die for the cooperative game is supplied in the Trade Expansion. Base game owners should put Invader faces on a gray die instead. Use a spare one for 2 or 3 player games. In a 4 player game, players without a 2nd red die play with 4, not 5, available gray dice.

VPs in Supply

solo: 30
2-players: 42
3-players: 54
4-players: 72

Player Setup Changes

2-4 players:
5 grain and 2 free upgrades.
solo invasion:
3rd die , 8 grain,
and 6 free upgrades.

Use a co-op tile setup (see back page), other setups, or draw tiles normally (War and Pillage faces will be limited by the invader die setup). Each player sets up normally except they begin with 5, not 3, grain and, after discussion, each player does 2 free upgrades *before* play begins.

Play. The game proceeds normally except:

The Invasion die is rolled each turn along with the Fate die and the attacks rolled affect all players (similar to the Fate die), after the players *in player order* resolve rerolling their dice. Do any Fate die attacks *before* the Invasion die attack. All attacks are resolved normally, except that players may use their shields showing to defend other players from attacks.

Example: In a 2-player game, the Robber is rolled on the Fate die and a Pillager on the Invasion die. The 2 players each face 2 attacks for a total of 4 attacks: 2 loss of die attacks (Robber) and 2 grain attacks (Pillager).

One player rolled a Town face with 2 shields. The Robber is resolved first and that player elects to use 1 shield to defend the other player and to set aside the Town die for the other die loss. This player uses the set aside Town's second shield to defend their partner from the Pillager's grain attack (as unused shields on set aside die faces can still defend) before losing 3 of their own grain. Their partner then uses their grain and rolled coins to buy a third die.



Player Attacks. After resolving the Invasion die, if any players have attacks showing, then if the Invader's die face showing does not have a shield — a single Invader shield blocks all player attacks — transfer 1-3 VPs from the Invader's VP chips to the VP pool for *each* player attack showing: grain attack: 1 VP; loss of die attack: 2 VPs; or face destruction attack: 3 VPs. If the Invader does not have enough VPs in chips to do this, transfer all the VP chips it has. Player attacks do *not* affect other players.

Invader. The Invader ignores Fate die results. In Collect, the Invader collects any VP chips it rolled from the common pool and ignores all other results. The Invader does no upgrades.

Grain Transfer. At the **end** of each round, players may freely transfer grain to other players (anticipating who might need grain next round for Winter, grain attacks, to buy dice, etc.).

Winning or Losing. The players win or lose together. To win, *every* player must score *more* VPs at game end than the Invader has in improved faces on the Invasion die (6-10 VPs, based on game difficulty), plus the VP chips it gained. Otherwise, the players *lose*.

Example: In a 2-player medium difficulty game, the Invader ends with 8 VPs from the Invasion die faces and 16 VPs in chips, for a total of 24 VPs. One player bought 2 more dice and upgraded many of their faces to end with 19 VPs in improved faces and 12 VP chips, a total of 31 VPs. The other player, who concentrated on defense and gaining VP chips, has only 9 VPs in improved faces but 16 points in VP chips, outscoring the Invader 25 to 24. Both players have more total VPs than the Invader and win!

Fine Points. Proceed sequentially through rerolls and attacks. Remember:

- Rerolls are done in player order. If you are first, you know what the other players initially rolled, but must make all your reroll decisions before (or without knowing) their rerolls.
- Players can use shields to defend each other but cannot “take” attacks for each other.
- Set aside dice with unused shields can use them to defend.
- A player can never lose their last die or undestroyed die face to attacks.



Example: In a 2-player game, the Fate die shows Plague (2 face destruction attacks) and the Invader die shows Knight (a loss of die attack). The invader takes 2 VPs from the pool and then resolves the Fate die attacks first. Anne elects to destroy her Serf face. With only 1 active face showing, she then ignores the 2nd face destruction attack. Ben uses both shields on his Town face to defend his faces against these attacks. (Anne cannot “take” these attacks on Ben and ignore them.) Anne then uses her Tower shield to defend Ben from the Invader’s loss of die attack while setting aside her die with the destroyed face. This defense enables Ben to spend his 5 coins showing, plus 2 grain, to buy a third die.



SOLO RULES

Two solo versions are provided: one where the player must contend with an invader, similar to the co-op game; and one where the player simply plays against time, using the invader die as a timer.

Setup (both). The supply has 18 grain, 6 Misery, 30 VPs, 2 gray and 2 green dice. Select a difficulty and invader die faces as in the co-op game (see above). If the Fate die is not modified by any tiles, replace Innovation with Lawlessness.



Invasion Solo: You begin with a third die, which is gray (not taken from the supply), 8 grain, and do 6 upgrades before play begins.

Play. Play as in the co-op game except that Invader die attacks (not VPs taken) occur *twice*.

Example: Lawlessness is rolled on the Fate die and a Knight on the Invasion die. You face a total of 3 loss of die attacks, 1 from Lawlessness and 2 from the Knight.

Goal. At game end, you must score more VPs than the Invader has. Otherwise, you lose.

Timed Solo: You begin as in the regular game (1 white die and 1 black die, 3 grain, 1 reroll token, and no upgrades). Use any tile setup.

Play. Play as in the regular game except roll the Invader die along with the Fate die. Ignore all Invader results (including attacks) except for VPs, which it removes from the VP pool *before* resolving any attacks by you, and its shield (which defends against attacks by you). Any attacks by you are resolved as in the co-op game (see above).

Goal. At game end, you must score *more* VPs than the Invader has on its die (6-10) *and* in VP chips (easy) or this amount+10 (medium) or this amount+15 (hard). If not, you lose.



COOPERATIVE / SOLO INVASION MINI-CAMPAIGNS

Two cooperative mini-campaigns are provided below. Each campaign consists of 3 linked cooperative games, the results of each game feeding into the next one. The players each gain an experience award for each game (regardless of whether they won or lost that game), plus either an additional smaller bonus if they won the previous game or increased difficulty in the next game if they lost. For the third game, only the experience award from the first game is combined with the second game's experience award and win/loss result. To win the campaign, players must simply win the third game.

#1 (intro): ***Winter of Discontent*** (underlined = face line; *italicized* = changed Fate die face)

Game 1: *The invaders attack! Will heroes and grain holdings enable the defenders to triumph?*

Tiles: Hero, Holdings (+grain), Matchmaker, Monastery, Plow Team

Invader Difficulty: Medium

Fate Die Faces: Winter, Winter, Good Harvest, Bad Harvest, *Lawlessness*, Robber

Experience award: replace 1 face with Hero *or* +1 starting upgrade

Win bonus: +2 starting grain

Loss Effect: -2 misery at start



Game 2: *With a disrupted harvest, a long winter ensues while the invaders regroup.*

Tiles: Almshouse, Grain Trade (+grain), Jack of all Trades, Patron, Temple

Invader Difficulty: Easy

Fate Die Faces: Winter, Winter, *Winter*, Bad Harvest, Bad *Harvest*, Robber

Other Adjustment: Add a -4* Misery/player to the Supply

Experience award: above, and replace 1 face with Jack of all Trades *or* +1 starting upgrade

Win bonus: +1 starting upgrade

Loss Effect: -3 grain at start



Game 3: *With the coming of spring, the invaders return in force.*

Tiles: Castellan, Cattle (+grain), Diplomat, Engineer, Monument

Invader Difficulty: Hard

Fate Die Faces: Winter, Winter, *Lawlessness*, Bad Harvest, Innovation, Robber



#2 (experienced): ***War & Plague*** (underlined = face line; *italicized* = changed Fate die face)

Game 1: *The invaders attack, landing in rural regions.*

Tiles: Blacksmith, Castellan, Fertile Valley, Gardener, Sheep (+grain)

Invader Difficulty: Medium

Fate Die Faces: Winter, Winter, Good Harvest, Bad Harvest, Innovation, Robber

Experience award: replace 1 face with Blacksmith *or* +1 starting upgrade

Win bonus: +1 starting upgrade

Loss Effect: destroy 1 starting face



Game 2: *The invasion slows, but plague erupts!*

Tiles: Banker, Granary, Matchmaker, Shrine, Quarantine

Invader Difficulty: Easy

Fate Die Faces: Winter, Winter, *Contagion*, Bad Harvest, *Plague*, *Lawlessness*

Experience award: above, and replace 1 face with Banker *or* +1 starting upgrade

Win bonus: +1 starting upgrade

Loss Effect: destroy 2 faces at start



Game 3: *As realms recover from the plague, the strengthened invaders renew their assault.*

Tiles: Almshouse, Aqueduct, Fairs, Plow Team, Steward

Invader Difficulty: Hard

Fate Die Faces: Winter, Winter, *Contagion*, Bad Harvest, Innovation, *Lawlessness*





HISTORICAL BACKGROUND / DESIGN NOTES

Dice Realms is set in Europe's late Medieval and early Renaissance period. Beset by plague and invaders, good and bad harvests, harsh weather, and unrest, medieval life was extremely uncertain. Two images capture this:

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Conquest, Civil War, Famine and Pestilence, and Death, convey an ever present sense of external threat.

The second image, Fortuna's Wheel, emphasizes that no one — Ruler, Merchant, or Peasant — is safe from fate. The plague, especially, devastated all levels of society, regardless of birth.

The inherent unpredictability of the late Middle Ages seemed a good setting for a dice game, with a sense of external threat being provided by the Fate die.

Unpredictability extended to farming and feeding the populace. In many farming games, including some set in medieval times, food production is treated as an almost industrial activity: plant some seed grain and then automatically harvest some more grain later.

The reality was quite different: harvests varied drastically, the benefits of crop rotation was just beginning to be understood, and weather extremes, such as harsh winters or droughts (without irrigation systems), wreaked havoc with food production. This is captured by the Good Harvest, Bad Harvest, and Winter faces of the Fate die.

As the ruler of a realm, you need to balance grain production. Too little grain leads to misery but collective overproduction leads to grain rotting in the fields (a grain ending). Grain is perishable and, while granaries existed, they served to secure future seed grain against seizure in times of famine, not to hold entire harvests.

Periods of prosperity alternated with times of strife due to invasions, raiders, civil war, or local robbers.

The Settlement line provides defense, along with the Hero and Castellan. The Settlement line's 2-dot Town face has two shields, which its 4-dot City face has only one shield. This represents how successful walled towns would expand beyond their defenses as they became cities.

The late Middle Ages was also a period of innovation, in part because of the opportunity for new ideas and upward social mobility caused by the devastation of the first great plague (~1250 CE), which killed an estimated $\frac{1}{3}$ of Europe's population.

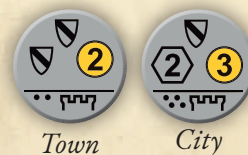
Plagues continued to recur throughout Europe for the next 450 years — the last large plague occurred in Marseilles in 1720.



In this more naturalistic depiction, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are part of a pillaging force.



Blind Fortuna turns the wheel of fate, from which no one is safe.



Town

City



Plague

One common defense against the plague was to shut the city gates, which is why, within the game, plague effects are attacks that can be defended. Traveling merchants needed access to closed towns, so documents attesting to their non-infected status would allow them to “pass-the-porte”. This is one of the origins of modern passports (the other being the safe travel documents Henry VIII issued to his diplomats).

Initially, many nobles fled to their rural villages to escape infected cities, only to discover that the countryside was also rife with contagion, due to the communal sharing of plow teams among multiple villages during planting season.

To reduce infection by sea, the mercantile city state of Ragusa (now the old town part of Dubrovnik) required visiting ships to wait 3 weeks before being allowed to disembark: a tarantino. This was increased by Venice and Genoa to 4 weeks, becoming a quarantino or quarantine.

Religion helped alleviate the despair and poverty caused by the plague and is represented in the game by Temples, Shrines, Monasteries, and, especially, the Almshouse.

Despite the social dislocations caused by plagues, nobles still imposed order and enforced a hierarchy based on land ownership, represented in the game by the Lands, Holdings, and Nobles lines, all of which grant victory points.

The primacy of land is also captured by the importance of gaining new dice, which represent realm expansion done either directly or dynastically, via matchmakers.

As Europe recovered from the plague, commerce resumed. Horse fairs evolved into great tournaments and trade fairs. Grain and woolen trade emerged, as did merchant houses and bankers to facilitate commercial activity.

Innovations, such as crop rotation, irrigation systems (aqueducts), and the selective breeding of cattle, pigs, and sheep led to increased food production. Patrons and universities helped usher in the Renaissance.

The Fairs, Grain Trade, Commerce, and Progress lines, plus the Banker, Innovation, and Patron faces, portray this growth. With increased prosperity came a greater sense of control and the ability to shape, instead of simply reacting to, the times.

Within the game, this is represented by the set-a-die tokens, which often enable players to create winning combinations on their dice.

Dice Realms centers players as the rulers of realms who must contend with both Fate and uncertainty, evoking both the perils and possibilities of late medieval times. Enjoy!



Town



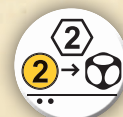
Contagion



Quarantine



Alms house



Matchmaker



Cattle



Sheep



Banker



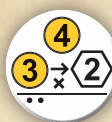
Innovation



ALTERNATIVE FIRST GAME TILES (no player attacks)

Gardener, *Patron*, Plow Team, *Shrine*, Steward

Patron



Shrine

SOLO SETUP

In Supply:

30 VPs, 6 misery,
18 grain, 2 of each die.

Use **Lawlessness**?

CO-OP / SOLO INVASION GAME SETUP

Invasion Die Face Setup

	Pillage			War		
	<i>Looter</i>	<i>Pillager</i>	<i>Invader</i>	<i>Soldier</i>	<i>Knight</i>	<i>Catapult</i>
Difficulty						
<i>Easy</i>	1	1	1	1	1	1
<i>Medium</i>	0	2	1	0	2	1
<i>Hard</i>	0	1	2	0	1	2

VPs in Supply

solo: 30

2-players: 42

3-players: 54

4-players: 72

Player Setup Changes

2-4 players:
5 grain and 2 free upgrades.

solo invasion:
3rd die ②, 8 grain,
and 6 free upgrades.



RECOMMENDED TILE SETUPS (especially for co-op and solo play)

Events: **bold**. Lines: underlined. Added grain or tiles follows in ().

Labor Division: Blacksmith, Engineer, Hero, Monument, Plow Team.

Some players can defend and earn VP chips while the others build and score VPs for improved faces.

The Long and Short of It: Cattle (+grain), Hero, Holdings (+grain), Jack of all Trades, Fertile Valley.

With three ways to gain VPs, how should you play this?

Timing Issues: Banker, Fertile Valley, Patron, Sheep (+grain), Shrine.

Do you earn VP chips steadily or aim for big endgame moves?

The Grain Must Flow: Diplomat, Gardener, Grain Trade (+grain), Matchmaker, Steward.

Can you manage both the grain and VP chip pools while also leveraging cheap extra dice?

A Delicate Balance: Castellan, Granary, Holdings (+grain), Jack of all Trades, Temple.

Should players specialize or should everyone attempt to defend and expand?

Necessity is the Mother of Innovation: Blacksmith, Engineer, Fairs, **Plague** (+ Quarantine), Plow Team.

This adds plague into the mix for an extra challenge.

CREDITS

Game design and rules: Tom Lehmann

Cover and tile illustrations: Martin Hoffmann, Claus Stephan

Graphics and production: Martin Hoffmann, Claus Stephan, Mirko Suzuki

Co-op and Solo Playtesting

Iain Alexander, Issac Caswell, David Grainger, David Hu,
Trisha and Wei-Hwa Huang, Karen Ladenheim, Keven Li,
Paul McDermott, Ben Prystawski, Alvin Tan, John Todd,
and Daniel Tregear

Special Thanks: Veronica Boyce and Joe Huber

Changeable dice: ©1993-2021 Dirk Laureyssens

All rights reserved.

Licensed to Rio Grande Games

©2025 Rio Grande Games

If you have comments, questions, or
suggestions, please write to us at:

Rio Grande Games, PO Box 1033
Placitas, NM 87043, USA

RioGames@aol.com
www.riograndegames.com

