Lost Cities

THE BOARD GAME

A Game by Reiner Knizia for 2-4 Players, Ages 10 Years and Up

SUMMARY

Each player leads a team of explorers consisting of four adventurers and one researcher on an expedition to discover lost cities. Five lost cities are found at the ends of separate paths consisting of nine stepping stones each. During your turn, you play a card to move one of your explorers (either an adventurer or the researcher) forward along a path. The color of the card played determines which path your explorer moves along. The card's value should be as low as possible because you can play a card only of equal or greater value in order to move an explorer forward along the path. You can decide how many explorers you send out. Each explorer that you send out must travel along a separate path — explorers from the same team cannot be on the same path. Your goal is to move all the explorers you have sent out as far along the paths as possible because you score negative points for the first three stepping stones. Only the following six stepping stones earn you positive points. The player with the most points at the end of the game wins. The artifacts you can collect along the way earn you valuable bonus points. The researcher (the larger explorer piece) is valuable too: When scoring takes place, the researcher earns you twice as many points — reason enough to move him as far along the path as possible!

GAME CONTENTS

- 1 Game board
- 110 Cards (2 of each card in values from 0 to 10, in each of 5 colors)
- 25 Event tiles

9 Artifact tiles *9 Arrow tiles* *7 Victory point tiles*

- 4 Sets of explorer pieces

4 Adventurers and 1 Researcher per color

- 64 Victory point tokens

- 27 Artifact tokens

PREPARING TO PLAY

Place the game board on the table and the victory point tokens and artifact tokens next to the board. Each player must choose an explorer piece color. Take the five corresponding explorer pieces and place them in front of yourself.

Shuffle the 25 event tiles **face down**. Place them in random order face down on the corresponding spaces on the game board and then turn them over.

Shuffle the cards face down and, one by one, deal **eight cards** face down to each player. Organize the remaining cards into a face-down draw pile and place them next to the game board.

Two-player game rule: Before dealing the cards, draw **30 cards** from the deck at random and face down, and return them to the box.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The game consists of three expeditions. After each expedition, scoring takes place. After the third expedition, bonus points for artifacts collected during the game are awarded. The players determine among themselves who starts the first expedition.

Overview of an Expedition

The players take turns in clockwise order. A turn consists of two parts, which are performed in the following order:

1. Playing a Card:

- Place a card face up in front of you to begin an expedition down a path by moving your explorer to the first stepping stone, or...
- Place a card face up on one of **your own cards** already placed in front of you to go to the next stepping stone on your path, or...
- Discard a card by placing it face up on one of the five discard piles.

2. Drawing a Card:

- Take a card from the face-down draw pile, or...
- Take a card from one of the face-up discard piles.

GAME RULES IN DETAIL

1. Playing a Card

The player whose turn it is chooses one of the cards in his or her hand and performs **one** of the following three actions:

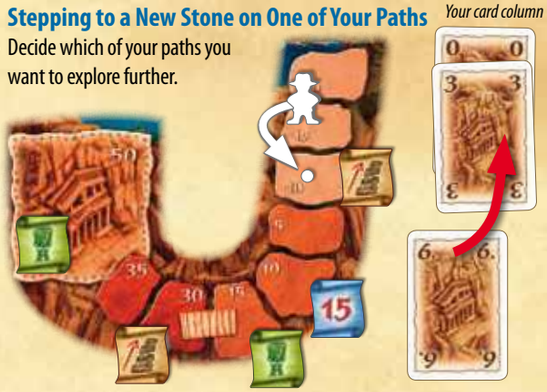
Beginning an Expedition Down a Path

- Choose one of your card colors and place the lowest-value card of this color face up in front of yourself to begin a new column. Later, only you may place cards on this card.
- Next, choose one of your explorer pieces (adventurer or researcher) and place it on the first stepping stone on the path of the same color ("-20"). The value "-20" means that for now this explorer piece earns you negative 20 points.

- **Important:** When scoring takes place at the end of the expedition, the **researcher** earns you twice the number of points depicted on the space of the path it is standing on.
- **Note:** Each player may only start one expedition per colored path! However, multiple players may explore paths of the same color (e.g., three players may each start exploring the blue path).

Stepping to a New Stone on One of Your Paths

- Decide which of your paths you want to explore further.



- Choose a card of the path's color from your hand and place it face up on the last of the cards of that color that you already placed in that column. The newly placed card must either be of the **same** or a **higher** value.
- Then move your explorer piece on this path to the next stepping stone.
- **Important:** If there is an **event tile** on the new space, please refer to the section *Finding an Event Tile* on the next page.

When an Explorer Has Already Reached a Lost City:

If one of your explorer pieces has already reached the final (ninth) stepping stone on a path and you place a (valid) card of that path's color, you may move **any** one of your explorer pieces one step forward on its path.

Discarding a Card

- Cards must be discarded into shared discard piles separated by card color. Up to five discard piles may be formed during the course of the game. Only the top card of each discard pile should be visible.
- To discard a card from your hand: If a discard pile of the same card color has already been started, place the card face up on this pile. If not, place it face up next to the game board to start a new discard pile.
- **Note:** You will accumulate cards in your hand that are of no use to you, which is why you may discard them. Let's say you start down a path by playing a red "4" card and then move forward by playing a red "7." If you then draw a red "3," you can't use it. Discard the card! However, you may want to keep the card until your opponents can't make use of it either.

After you have played a card, continue with *Drawing a Card*.

2. Drawing a Card

At the end of your turn, draw a card. You have two options:

- Draw the top card from the face-down draw pile, or...
- Draw the top card from one of the face-up discard piles.

Now your hand contains eight cards again, and your turn is complete. The next player in the clockwise direction takes his or her turn.

Finding an Event Tile

If you move an explorer piece to a stepping stone that contains an event tile, you must perform the corresponding action immediately:

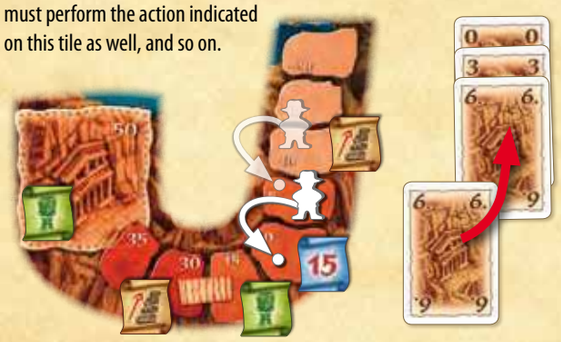
Artifact Tile:
Remove the artifact tile from the game board and place it in front of yourself. **The tile space remains empty.**

Victory Point Tile:
You receive victory point tokens corresponding to the value indicated on the tile. With victory points, the researcher does not receive twice as many points. Victory point tokens should always be kept face down. The victory point tile **remains face up in its space** on the stepping stone.

Victory point tile

Victory point token

Arrow Tile:
You may move **any one** of your explorer pieces **already on any of the paths** forward one stepping stone. The arrow tile **remains** face up **in its space**. If the stepping stone you move this explorer piece onto also contains an event tile, you must perform the action indicated on this tile as well, and so on.



Example: *On a previous turn, after placing his third card, thanks to the arrow tile the player was able to move his explorer one step forward. However, he would have been allowed to advance another one of his explorer pieces (that was already in play) instead. After placing his fourth card, the player earns victory point tokens worth 15 victory points on the new stepping stone.*

Ending an Expedition and Scoring

- An expedition immediately ends when a total of **five explorer pieces have crossed the bridges** (between the sixth and seventh stepping stones). This doesn't have to be the case on all five paths. It is absolutely possible that on one path two explorer pieces have passed the bridge and on another path no explorer pieces have passed the bridge.

- If the explorer piece that ends the expedition reaches a space containing an event tile, the corresponding action is **not** performed.
- **An expedition also ends** when the **last card** of the face-down draw pile is drawn.

After the game ends, scoring takes place.

Scoring an Expedition

Each explorer piece on the game board earns its owner victory points:

- Each of your **adventurers** earns you as many victory points as depicted on the stepping stone it is standing on. The **researcher** earns you twice as many points as depicted on the stone it is standing on.
- If a stepping stone shows a **negative number,** you lose the corresponding number of victory points (and again, twice the number for the researcher.) Positive point totals are immediately paid to you by means of victory point tokens, and negative point totals must be paid back. None of the players can have fewer than zero victory points.
- Afterward, the players return their explorer pieces to their supplies.
- Each player who has artifact tiles must give them back to reset the board. In exchange for each artifact tile, the player receives a square artifact token, which is placed face up in front of the player.

Exchange: Artifact tiles for artifact tokens

The Next Expedition

- After scoring, shuffle all 25 event tiles (including the nine artifact tiles) face down, place them randomly face down on the corresponding spaces on the game board, and turn them over.
- Shuffle all cards. Once again, deal eight cards face down to each player. Organize the remaining cards into a face-down draw pile.
- All players keep their victory point tokens and artifact tokens. The player who follows in clockwise order after the player who played last during the previous expedition starts the subsequent expedition.

ENDING THE GAME

The game ends after the scoring of the **third expedition** has taken place.

- Afterward, the players count their artifact tokens. The **long scoring track** indicates how many victory points you will be paid for your artifact tokens. If you have collected fewer than six artifact tokens, you must pay back victory points.

- Then each player calculates the sum of the values of his or her victory point tokens. The player with the highest total wins the game. If there is a tie between two or more players, the tied player who collected the most artifact tokens wins.

THE SHORT GAME

The short game ends after only one expedition instead of after three. The artifact tokens are also scored differently: The value of your collected artifact tokens is indicated by the **short scoring track** instead of the long scoring track.

RULE VARIANT

Moving Along a Path Using Increasing or Decreasing Card Value
Before beginning the game, the players can agree to play with the following rule variant:

- Instead of beginning a path by playing a low-value card and then adding cards of increasing values, each player can decide if they want to proceed in the reverse order, from high-value cards to low-value cards.
- The act of placing a second card of different (higher or lower) value on the previous card for any one path determines whether the player wants to place **all cards for this particular path** in ascending or descending order. The players are free to use increasing card values for one path and decreasing card values for another.

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