

# Syba Chess: Rules guide for the game

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Disclaimer: This guide is meant for the newly developed Syba Chess 2.0. The original compendium: 'An in dept analysis of Syba Chess and its many strategies' can still be used while playing this game, but do note that some of the rules have been severely changed since the original release of Syba Chess (34 A.D.).

## A Game of war (and diplomacy)

Syba Chess simulates the ever continuing power struggle between the various races and groups within Syba. As such, war and battle is a common occurrence in the game.

One of the main objectives in this game is to capture cities, which is usually done by attacking said cities (see chapter Attacking for a more in dept explanation). However, this is not necessary to win the game.

To win the game, a player must either:

- Own 15 cities.
- Be the last player owning a city.
- Buy the [World Spell](#).

Alternatively, there are **Hero** cards that let you win when another player wins the game (as such multiple players can win the game at the same time). These cards replace the Political Marriage rule of prior versions.

## Quick Setup

Place the game board on the table and the city, army, unit, hero and research cards next to it.




Determine the **turn order** in which the game will be played. This is done by choosing a player who will start. The other players will take their turns clockwise afterwards.

In turn order, choose a Race to play with, which is also accompanied by a Color.

This choice is purely cosmetically and is limited to: Aberrant Army (blue), Demonic Horde (red), Draconic Might (orange), Forces of the Fey (green), Human Realm (white) and Shadow Empire (black). Take the army card, unit cards, unit chips, colored disks and cubes linked to this army and place it in front of you.

In turn order, choose a starting city. Pick a city from the city card pile and place it beneath your army card, facing down. You should be able to see its Start With and Once per Game action.

In turn order, execute the Start With action. This can grant you Resources, **Units**, **Upgrades**, **Buildings** or **Cities**. First take any city cards gained from this ability, and place those face **up**, next to your starting city. Then for each **Unit**, find its corresponding chip, and place those on the board, with the cross facing down (Rested). Finally take any **Upgrades** and **Buildings** gained from this ability from the research card pile. Place your upgrade cards on your army card, and your building cards on any city card you own. Note: if your Start With Action gives you a **Hero**, **Upgrade**, **Building** or **City** that isn't available anymore, you simply don't receive it.

In turn order, place the colored disks below on the map to indicate the total amount of Resources you have. You start off with zero of each of the three types of Resources: Unit Production , Food  and Research , but add the Resources gained from your Start With action.

In turn order, place the colored cubes below on the map to indicate the total amount of Resources you gain each turn. This is the same as the total of the Resources listed on all of your city cards.

At this point, you should have a situation that looks like below. The starting player can now begin by taking its turn.



In the starting situation shown above, the following numbers indicate:

1. Research card pile
2. Hero card pile
3. Card pile
4. The Shadow Empire **army card**.
5. A city gained from a Start With action (and thus **facing up**)
6. A starting city (and thus **facing down**)
7. An Upgrade gained from a Start With action; this was retrieved from the research card pile and then placed on top of the army card.
8. A Hero gained from a Start With action; this was retrieved from the
9. A Building gained from a Start With action. This was retrieved from the research card pile and placed on a city card.
10. The Aberrant Unit cards, used to see what your unit chips look like.
11. The chips of three Shadow Soldiers located at Barren Hall.
12. A hero chip of Deosiderium located at Threeway (linked to 8).
13. A colored disk indicating the Aberrant's player starting Unit Production.
14. Colored disks and cubes indicating total Resources and Resources gained each turn.

## Taking Turns:

After the setup is done, turns are taken in turn order.

At the start of your turn, add Resources equal to the total of what all your cities provide. Do note that you can't, at any point, have more than 40 of any Resource (any excess Resource gained are lost).

At any point during your turn, in any order you want, you can do the following:

- Spend resources (see Spending Resources)
- Move any or all Units you own (see Moving a Unit)
- Exhaust any or all Units you own (see Exhausting a Unit)
- Trade with other players (see Trading)

Each of these options are optional. Note that units can generally only be moved and exhausted once per turn, unless an ability (such as an **Upgrade**, or the expenditure of Food) says so.

After you have done everything you want, the next player takes its turn, and so on, until any player wins the game. The game immediately ends at that point.

## Spending Resources

There are three types of resources. When spending Resources, reduce them from your total amount of Resources of that type, and update your Resources appropriately (indicated with the colored disks on the map)

Unit Production  is used to build units. You can:


- Spend 2 Unit Production to buy a **Soldier**.
- Spend 5 to buy a **Knight**.
- Spend 8 to buy a **Monster**.
- Spend 10 to obtain any one **Hero**.

When buying a **Soldier**, **Knight** or **Monster**, look at your Unit Cards and take the chip that represents that unit. When obtaining a **Hero**, choose any hero card left in the hero card pile and place it in front of you. Then take the corresponding chip too. In both cases, place the chip on the board on any city you own, in its Rested state (cross facing down).


If you can't find a chip to place (for an instance, because you already own the maximum amount of that type of Unit), you can't buy the Unit.

Units can't be Exhausted or Moved in the same turn that they were placed on the board, unless you received those units from your Start With action.

Food  is used to maintain and improve your units. You can:

- Spend 1 Food to Rest 1 Unit.
- Spend 2 Food to allow 1 Unit to be Exhausted once more this turn.
- Spend 6 Food to allow all units to be moved once more this turn.
- Spend 10 Food to improve each of your unit's Power  by 1 this turn.

As with any Resource expenditure; each of these effects can be bought any amount of times, as long as there is Food to buy them, and can even be applied to the same Unit.

Finally, Research  can be used to buy **Buildings**, **Upgrades** and **Spells**. You can buy any Research still in the research card pile, by spending the amount of Research listed on the back (5, 10, 20 or 40)

**Buildings** are attached to a city and grant a benefit as long as you own that city. When a city is Discarded or is captured by another player, the building remains part of the city. As such another player can capture a city with a building already attached to it and



gain the benefits of the building in addition to receiving the City's Resources. When buying a building, place the building card on the city card. A building is automatically destroyed if the city is also destroyed.

**Upgrades** are placed on the army card and grant a benefit as long as it isn't Discarded or Destroyed.

When buying a **Spell**; execute the action listed on the spell card and then Discard the card afterwards. As such, you can cast the same spell any amount of times each turns, as long as you have the Research to buy it with.

## Discard vs Destroy

A Discarded card is placed back in the card pile it came from (its location doesn't matter, as players can look at the pile any time they want). Such **Units**, **Buildings**, **Upgrades**, **Spells** and **Cities** can be bought or captured again.

A Destroyed card however is set aside for this game, and **can't** be bought or captured again. The exceptions to this rule are **Soldiers**, **Knights** and **Monsters**, as they are not bound to a card pile.

Whenever something is Destroyed or Discarded, their corresponding chips (if any) are removed from the board.

## Moving a Unit

When moving a Unit, take its chip and move it to an adjacent area. If the Unit can move more than once in a turn, resolve each movement one at a time.

When moving a Unit in an army, you may instead move any or all units in that army at the same time, provided that they all move to the same area.

When an army enters an area through movement, any army that is within Reach of that area, may immediately Attack the entering army, even if it isn't their turn. If there are

multiple players that have an army within Reach, each player gets to decide whether they want to Attack in turn order.

## Definition of Army

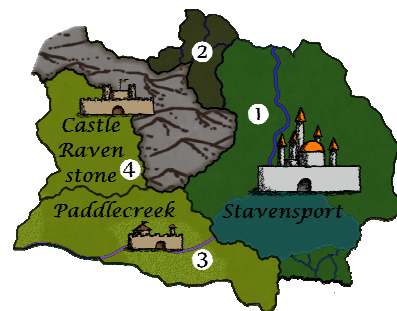
An army is considered any group of Units performing the same action (Moving, Attacking, Defending, Helping or doing nothing) in the same area, belonging to the same player. When a **Hero** refers to 'this army' it refers to the army it is part of.



*Each number represents an army.*

## Definition of Areas

Areas are defined on the board, and have no more than one **City** in it. If a **Hero** refers to 'this area' it refers to the area it is currently located at. If a **Building** refers to 'this area' it refers to the area its city is located at.

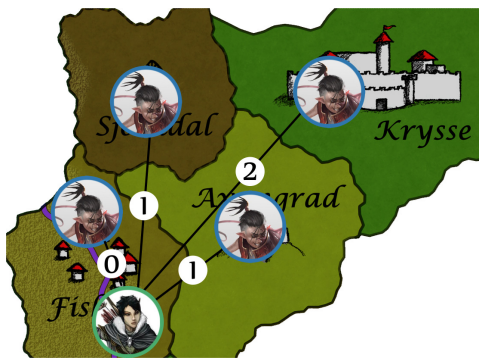


*Number 1, 2, 3 and 4 are all areas. Area 2 has no city, similar to an area with a Destroyed city.*



## Definition of Reach

Reach determines which areas an Army or Unit can Attack. All players start with a Reach of 0, meaning that units can only attack armies or cities in the area they are currently located at. A Reach of 1 would mean that they can also attack armies and cities in adjacent areas, whereas a Reach of 2 would mean there can be one area between the attacker and the defender... and so on.



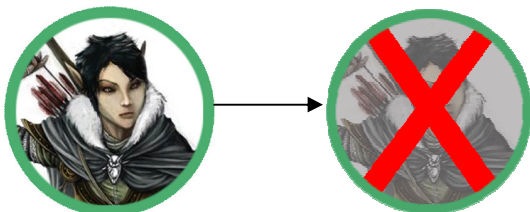
*The numbers indicate the Reach needed to attack.*

## Exhausting a Unit

You can Exhaust a Rested Unit to do any of the following:

- Move the unit one additional time.
- Attack with the unit.
- Do any Exhaust actions listed on the corresponding hero card.

To Exhaust a Unit, flip its chip to the Exhausted state.



*Example of Exhausting a Rested Fey Soldier.*

You can generally only Exhaust a Unit once during your turn. If you are able to Exhaust a Unit multiple times (such as through the

expenditure of Food 🍷), the Unit needs to be Rested every time before Exhausting it again.

## Attacking

You can attack an army or a city. To attack something, Exhaust all Units you want to attack with, and select the army or city you want to attack.

After deciding what to attack with, each player can then, in turn order, decide if they want to Help the attacker, or the defender. To Help the attacker, a player can Exhaust each unit they wish to Help with. Each Exhausted unit's Power will be added to the attacking army's Power.

A player can Help the defending army or city by selecting each **army** they wish to Help with. If they do, each selected army adds their combined Power to the defending's army's Power (or City Strength).

Note that each Unit and Army that wishes to participate in the fight (either by Attacking or Helping), need to be in Reach of the defending army or city.

When every player decided if they want to Help or not, Battle ensues (during battle abilities of **Heroes** can now be used). If an army is attacked, check if there is a city located in the area of the defending player. If there is, and the defending player owns it, he or she adds the City Strength to the defending army's Power.

If the attacking army has a combined Power 🍷 that is equal or higher than the defending army's Power 🍷 (or City Strength, when attacking a city), each Unit in the defending army is destroyed, as is each Unit in any army who was Helping the defending army or city. If the city in the area was also part of the fight (the city was attacked, or the defending player controlled the city), the attacking player also captures the city.

If the defending's army combined Power is higher, nothing happens.

## Cities

There are 5 types of Cities:

**Settlement**; these provide 1 Resource and have 1 City Strength. Settlements are indicated on the board with a dark brown hue. The existing Settlements are: En Diren, Kaul, Sae, Varan, Beregen, Waking Dam, Sjochedal, Bri Ville and Riverdrop.

**Village**; these provide 2 Resources and have 2 City Strength. Villages are indicated with a light brown hue. The existing villages are: Altera, Heran, Bell, Twin Axe, Threeway, Riverdale, Andalar's Fist, Barren Hall, Fiskes, and Skogsneder.

**Town**; these provide 3 Resources and have 3 City Strength. Towns are indicated with a yellow hue. The existing towns are: Karon Arkas, Ilieth, Ravenclaw, Kotzenburg, Avangrad, Shadowdeep, Everspring and Iras.

**Major City**; these provide 4 Resources and have 4 City Strength. Major cities are indicated with a light green hue. The existing major cities are: Litilien, Gaer'Alleth, Vastport, City of Hope, Bri Edge and Krysse.

**Capital City**; these provide 5 Resources and have 5 City Strength. Capital cities are indicated with a dark green hue. The existing capital cities are: Stavensport, City of the Trueborn and Faer Alorn.

Lastly there are areas with no city in it, indicated with a dark grey hue. These provide no Resources and no City Strength. Do note: if a city is Destroyed, the area of the city functions as an area with no city in it.

When you Capture a city, take the city card from the card pile, or the player who currently owns it, and place it next to the other cities you own, facing up. Adjust your Resource



1: Settlement, 2: Village, 3: Town, 4: Major City, 5: Capital City, 6: Area with no City

Production on the board accordingly. You also start benefitting from any **Buildings** attached to the city. When a **Building** refers to 'this city', it refers to the city it is attached to.

## Start With and Once per Game

You only place your starting city facing down in front of you and you can only use the Start With action and Once per Game action with that city. Other cities you acquire are always placed facing up, with these two actions invisible. The Start With action is used in the setup round, and can be ignored after that.

The Once per Game action can be used once per game, during any turn. Once it is used, the city card is flipped, and it acts as any other city from that point on. If your starting city is captured before you used the Once per Game action, the action is lost.

## Trading

During your turn, you can Trade. You can Trade away Resources, Units and even Cities.

To do this, you can simply ask Players if they wish to Give you something in exchange for you to Give them something back. It doesn't have to be an equal trade, and it can consist entirely out of promises. However, you cannot trade against their consent, even if it means you Giving something for nothing. Once a deal is made, both players are forced to Give the agreed upon goods.

## Giving

There are various reasons a Player is forced to Give something. Buildings such as the **Golden Hand School**, heroes such as **Lagaron Proudheart** and cities such as **Vastport** all do this. The most common reason however is Trading.

When you Give a Unit, the following is done: You discard your unit. The player you give it to places such unit in an Exhausted state on the same area as your discarded Unit was located at (and takes the corresponding hero card if it was a hero). If that player can't place a corresponding chip (for an instance, you are giving a **Monster**, but the other player already has 5 monsters), the Unit is lost.

When you Give Resources:

Reduce the amount of Resources you have of that type and add it to the total amount of the other Player (adjust on the board accordingly). If the player has more than 40 of that type of Resources, any excess Resources are lost.

When you Give a City:

Hand over the city card to the player you Give the city to. The other player effectively Captures your city. You can recapture your city in the same turn you have Given it away.

## Example Move and Fight

Imagine the following situation:

City of the Trueborn contains Shiara (who has 2 Power and grants the entire army she is in one additional Reach) and two Shadow Soldiers. Andalar's Fist has one Human Knight and one Human Soldier. Barren Hall has two Shadow Soldiers and Faer Alorn has one Fey Monster. None of the players have any Upgrades or Buildings, so most Units have a Reach of 0 (except for the army with Shiara).



The human player can enter Faer Alorn with both his Knight and Soldier, but the Monster has a Power of 3, and his Knight and Soldier have a combined Power of 3 as well. If he moves in with both, the Monster can attack him, and then both units are Destroyed. Instead he moves in with just his Soldier.

The Fey player immediately responds by Exhausting his Monster to Attack the Soldier. As the Monster has more Power than the Soldier, the defending army (in this case, just the Soldier) is Destroyed.

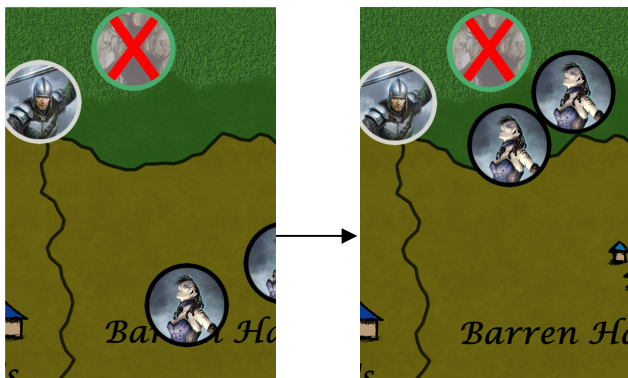




The Human player sends his Knight in after. As the Fey Monster is Exhausted, he cannot attack the Knight, so the Knight remains standing in Faer Alorn.

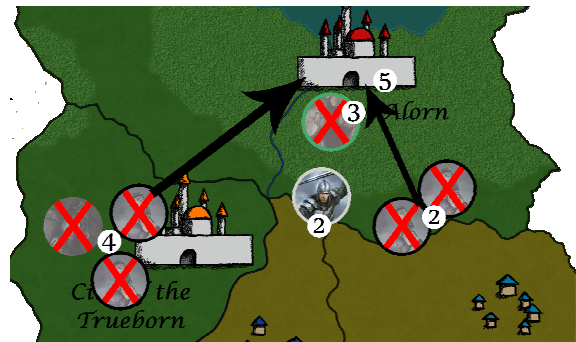
The Human Player decides not to Exhaust his Knight this turn. He can use it to Attack, but the defending army is simply too strong at this point. He ends his turn.

The Shadow Army sends his units after the Human knight. This time: both the Fey player and the Human player could attack the Shadow Soldiers. However, the Fey Monster is still Exhausted, so it can't be Exhausted again until it is Rested. The Human player on the other hand simply decides not to, even though his Power is enough to beat the Soldiers.



Now that the two Shadow Soldiers are within Reach of the Human Knight, the Shadow Player could decide to attack the knight, as his Power would now be enough. He decides differently however...

The Shadow Player Exhausts his two Soldiers in Faer Alorn, to attack the city. He also Exhausts his army in City of the Trueborn to Help the attacking army, as they are all (due to Shiara's Reach bonus) within Reach of the defending city. Two armies are Attacking Faer Alorn now, for a combined Power of 6. As can be seen in the following image, Faer Alorn's City Strength is 5, so that should be enough.



Other players can now, in turn order, decide if they want to Help the attacking or the defending army. As the turn order is (in this example) Human, Shadow, Fey; the Fey player can first decide whether he wants to Help. He only has one army that is in Reach of Faer Alorn, and that is his Fey Monster. As he cannot Exhaust it to Help the attacker, and rather not want to lose his City, he decides to commit his entire army of 1 Fey Monster to Help defend Faer Alorn. The City Strength is now 8.

Now the Human Player gets to decide if he wants to Help, and if so, which side.

He decides to Exhaust his knight to Help the attacker. Now two armies are Helping the attacking army of two Shadow Soldiers, for a total of 8 Power. One army is Helping the defending city, for a total City Strength of 8. The Attacker wins, and thus all armies Helping the defending city are Destroyed, in this case the one Fey Monster. In addition: the Shadow Player captures Faer Alorn, as he controlled the attacking army.

