TERMITES

Fréderic Moyersoen

REBEL

TERMITES

Author: Fréderic Moyersoen

A strategy game about relentlessly struggling insects for 2–4 players.

Termites (Isoptera) – an infraorder of eusocial insects, within the order Blattodea.

INTERESTING FACT

Despite superficial similarities and a tendency to live in huge colonies, termites are more closely related to cockroaches than to ants.

At first glance, life moves slowly on the sun-scorched plains of Africa. But there is more than meets the eye. There is eternal war among termite colonies in the grass. The territorial instinct drives them to continual battle. Tangible proof of their tenacity are the huge mounds that contain millions of insect warriors, always ready to defend their fortress.

Use your cleverness and strategic skill, fighting your opponents for survival, conquering mounds, and expanding into new territories.

GAME GOAL

The goal of the game is to take control of enemy and neutral Mounds while defending one's own Mounds. The winner is the player who owns the Mounds with the highest total value at the end of the game.

LIST OF COMPONENTS

Double-sided board, 4 termite colonies 18 tokens each, 18 double-sided terrain tiles, 25 Mounds, 4 player screens, rulebook.

double-sided board

terrain tiles

4 sets of colonies

player Mounds

player screens

COLONIES

The game has 4 sets of units (each in their own color with different symbols on the reverse) representing 4 different termite colonies. Each colony is different in terms of the distribution of number of termites on their tokens and the castes of their termites; this affects the tactics used during the game. Each colony has 18 tokens in its color.

BLUE – A colony based on the worker caste. It is the fastest, so it can surprise the enemy with an attack from an unexpected direction, and it reacts quickly to enemy maneuvers.

RED – A colony based on the brute force of the soldier caste. Their destructive force helps them break through any defense.

GOLD – A colony based on the abilities of the spitter (nasute) caste, which means ranged attacks. They support the troops fighting on the front lines and help to draw the enemy into a trap.

GRAY – A colony based on the flyer (alate) caste. They surprise the enemy, attacking where they are not expected.

MOUNDS

Each colony has 5 Mounds, with values from 5 to 9. This number is both the Mound's defense value as well as its point value during scoring at the end of the game. There are also from 1 to 3 neutral Mounds with value 7.

BATTLEFIELD

The game is played on a board divided into hexagonal spaces (hexes). One side of the board has a map with pre-printed terrain for the first match between 2 players. The other side of the board has an empty map. This can be prepared for various custom scenarios (see pages 13–14).

DESCRIPTION OF TOKENS

Each player has 18 tokens representing units of fighting insects. A unit's combat strength depends on the number of termites printed on it as well as the strength of their caste. There are 4 castes:

Workers – These are the most numerous and very mobile; they are the basic troops of the army. In times of peace, they do most of the work around the Mound and care for the offspring of the queen.

On the battlefield, they can move 2 hexes, and each worker printed on a token has strength 1. (E.g. a token with 2 workers has combat strength 2.)

Special Ability: None.

Soldiers – These are easily identified by their large heads and giant mandibles. They stand on the front line when something threatens the colony.

On the battlefield, they can move 1 hex, and each soldier printed on a token has strength 2. (E.g. a token with 2 soldiers has combat strength 4.)

Special Ability: Strong grip – units attacked by soldiers cannot retreat; they are immediately removed from the board. A soldier merely supporting the attack does not cause this effect.

INTERESTING FACT

Sometimes soldiers' mandibles are so huge that the soldiers cannot feed themselves, and so workers feed them.

Spitters – These are a special type of soldiers. They have the unique ability to spit an unpleasant sticky substance at the enemy.

On the battlefield they can move 1 hex, and each spitter printed on a token has strength 1. (E.g. a token with 2 spitters has combat strength 2.)

Special Ability: Secretion – apart from performing normal attacks, they can also support an attack on a unit up to 2 hexes away from them. In addition, while supporting an attack from Vegetation, a spitter token's total strength is increased by 1.

INTERESTING FACT

Usually spitters' ability is used in self-defense. This form of attack appears in only a small number of species.

Flyers – These individuals with wings are very rare. Their main advantage is mobility.

On the battlefield they can move up to 3 hexes, and each flyer printed on a token has strength 1. (E.g. a token with 2 flyers has combat strength 2.)

Special Ability: Flying – They can move up to 3 hexes, and can fly through hexes with enemy non-flyer units. They cannot fly through areas occupied by enemy flyers. They treat Water as Clear terrain, and they can end their movement on Water. They cannot move into or through Vegetation, nor attack a unit in Vegetation. A flyer forced by combat into a hex with Vegetation is automatically immediately eliminated. It can enter the Stone hex for only 1 movement point.

INTERESTING FACT

Under natural conditions, only some of flyers will have the honor of metamorphosing into a king or queen, to create a new colony.

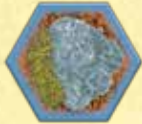| CASTE					
Movement	2	1	1	3	0
Strength	1	2	1	1	5–9
Special Ability	—	Strong grip	Secretion	Flying	—

The game has 4 types of terrain:

Clear – terrain with no additional rules or restrictions. It has no special effect on movement or combat.

Water – terrain which only **flyers** can enter or end their movement on. No other units can enter Water.

Vegetation – **Spitter** units in Vegetation while supporting an attack have their combat strength increased by 1. **Flyers** cannot enter Vegetation.

Stones – A unit attacked in Stones has its defense strength increased by 1. (E.g. a token with 2 **workers** normally has combat strength 2, but in Stones it defends with strength 3.) Entering Stones requires 2 movement points for **workers** and 1 movement point for **flyers**, so only them can enter Stones. **Soldiers** and **spitters** cannot move into Stones (but they may be placed there during the reproduction phase).

PREPARING FOR PLAY

The game board has 2 sides: one side is printed with terrain suggested for a 2-player game, and the other side has only clear terrain. At the end of the rulebook, there are examples of terrain setup for playing with 3 and 4 players. We suggest using the proposed setups during the first few games.

1) Players place terrain tiles and neutral Mounds according to the chosen terrain setup (see pg. 13) or do it on their own (see pg. 14).

2) Each player takes 1 color set including 18 Termite tokens, 5 Mounds and one player screen. Each set of 18 Termites is shuffled to form a face down stack. If players cannot agree which colony each will take, then assign colors randomly. Players put player screens in front of them and then put tokens and Mounds in front of the screens.

Remember that each colony has a different distribution of units, which influences strategy.

3) The starting player is chosen randomly.
Each player draws 3 random tokens from their face down stack, without revealing them to opponents. He may hide them behind his screen.

4) In clockwise order, starting with the starting player, each player chooses one of their own Mounds and places it onto the board. Each Mound must be placed on an empty clear hex not adjacent to any other Mound. There can be at most one adjacent Water hex, but there are no other restrictions on terrain in the adjacent hexes. Mounds cannot be placed on a hex at the edge of the board.

Note: In a 2-player game, players place 2 Mounds in this order: the first player places one Mound, the second player places two Mounds, the first player places his second Mound.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Players take turns in clockwise order. Each player's turn has 2 phases:

REPRODUCTION PHASE

The player chooses 1 token from the 3 in their hand and places it **face up** onto any empty board space. Then the player draws a new random token from their stack (if any are left) to have 3 tokens in hand again. Players should keep their hand hidden from opponents. The player screens may come in handy. If a player's draw stack is empty, then their tokens in hand are the last ones they will have. The game will end soon.

A token cannot be placed onto a space forbidden to that type of unit. E.g. a **flyer** cannot be placed onto Vegetation; a non-flyer cannot be placed onto Water. But a token may be placed onto a hex which the unit lacks movement points to move into. I.e. a **soldier** or **spitter** may be placed onto Stones, even though they lack movement points to move into Stones.

MOVEMENT PHASE

The player chooses one of their tokens on the board (whether or not placed this turn) and moves it according to the movement rules for its caste (see *Caste table*, pg. 6). The player may decide not to move, but as a result gives up the opportunity to attack (see below).

During movement, a token can move through hexes occupied by friendly units from their own colony, but not through hexes occupied by enemy units. However, **flyers** can move through hexes occupied by enemy units, except hexes occupied by enemy **flyers**.

Player's move cannot end on a hex occupied by a friendly unit.

If a planned move would end on a hex occupied by an enemy unit or Mound, then it is an attack. This is legal only when the **total attack strength (including support) is greater than the defending strength of the defending unit or Mound**. Remember that **flyers** cannot finish their movement on Vegetation, which means that they cannot attack termites placed there.

> *The combat strength of each unit is the number of termites printed on the token, multiplied by 2 for soldiers. The total attack strength is the sum of the attacking unit's combat strength plus the combat strength of support units.*

All the attacking player's units adjacent to the target hex, and all their **spitters** within 2 hexes, are support units. Additionally, each supporting **spitter** token in Vegetation has +1 added to its support strength.

The defense strength is simply the defending unit's combat strength, with +1 added for a defender in Stones. **(There is no defensive support from other units.)** A Mound's defense strength is simply the number printed on the Mound.

The diagrams show the legal movement of the unit on the board.

blue worker movement options

blue spitter / soldier movement options

A non-flyer unit can move through the hexes occupied by the friendly units and can attack from such hexes, but it cannot finish its move on an occupied hex.

yellow flyer movement options

A **flyer** unit can also move and attack through hexes occupied by the friendly units, but it cannot finish its move on an occupied hex. As it moves in the air, it can enter the Stone hex for only 1 movement point.

ATTACK RESOLUTION

The attacked unit must retreat to an adjacent empty hex, subject to the usual movement restrictions, i.e. **soldiers** and **spitters** may not retreat onto Stones, **flyers** may not retreat onto Vegetation, and only **flyers** may retreat onto Water. Additionally, a unit may not retreat into the hex from which the attacker attacked the target hex.

If an attacked unit has no legal place to retreat, then it is destroyed (permanently removed from the game). The attacking unit enters the target hex.

If a **soldier** unit attacks, the defender is automatically destroyed, even if it has a legal retreat hex. (A **soldier** supporting the attack does not cause this effect.)

If a Mound is attacked, it is destroyed. The attacking player takes the Mound as a trophy, which will be worth its printed number of victory points at the end of the game.

The unit which attacked the Mound (not a supporting unit) **is also destroyed**. The attacker must place one of their own (unplaced) Mounds onto the space from which the trophy Mound (also the neutral one) was taken.

A player whose Mound was destroyed must place one of their own (unplaced) Mounds onto an **empty hex** as during setup: not adjacent to another Mound or the edge of the board or more than 1 Water hex. A player who has no more unplaced Mounds does not place one.

In the unusual case where a player must place a Mound but there is no legal place to do so, then the player must remove one of their own termites to make an empty legal space for their Mound.

supported attack and available retreat directions
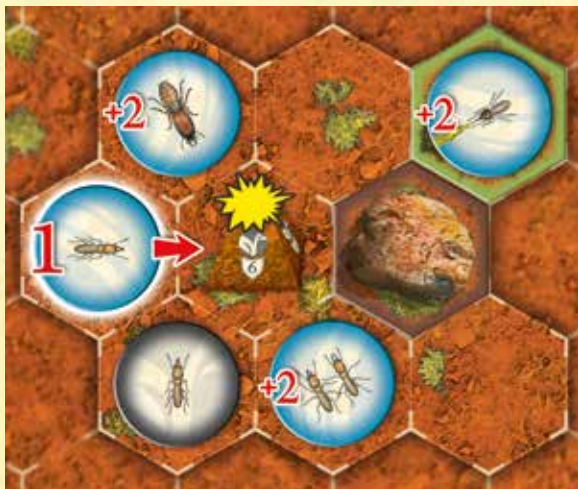
supported attack on the enemy Mound

supported attack with enemy destruction because the retreat is not possible

GAME END

The game ends when no player has termite tokens left in their hand.

VICTORY CONDITIONS

The winner is determined by points earned. After the game ends, each player adds up the value of the Mounds they captured + their Mounds on the board + their still unplayed Mounds.

The player with the highest score wins.

In case of a tie, the tying player with the most tokens on the board wins the tie. Any remaining ties remain ties!

Good luck and have fun!
REBEL team
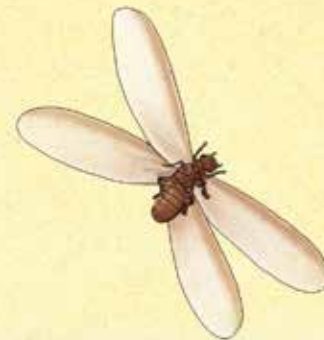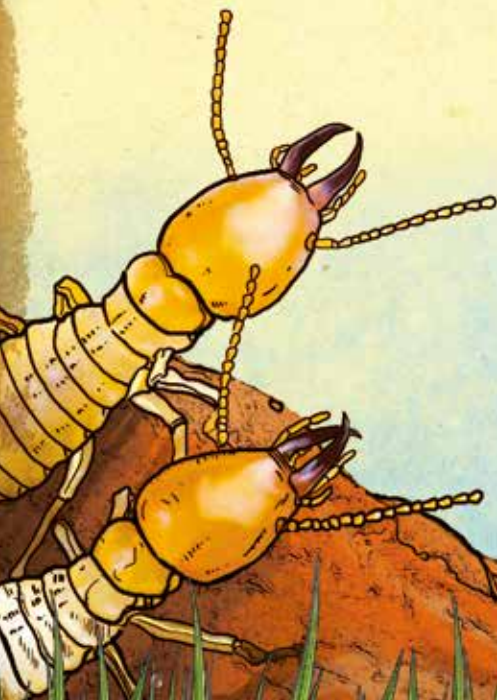
setup for 3 players

advanced setup for 3 players

setup for 4 players

advanced setup for 4 players

SETTING UP A MAP

To make gameplay more varied, the terrain tiles and neutral Mounds can be placed by players according to the following rules:

1) Before setting up the board, put all the terrain tiles in one place and in such a way that they are visible for every player. Players decide how many terrain tiles will be used (we propose 16 to 18 tiles).

2) Neutral Mounds should be placed on the board before the terrain tiles. There always should be one neutral Mound less than the number of players. Remember that they cannot be placed on the edge of the board and next to each other (see pg. 8).

3) Players take turns placing 2 tiles onto the board. They choose the tile sides they want to use and immediately place the tiles on the hexes of their choice. They do it until all terrain is placed. When there is an odd number of tiles, the last player places only one final tile. When placing the terrain tiles around neutral Mounds, you have to remember that they cannot be adjacent to two Water tiles (see pg. 8).

At most 2 tiles of a given terrain type can be connected in a single continuous group of that type.
At most 4 terrain tiles (regardless of type) can be connected in a single continuous group.


examples of legal placement

incorrect terrain placement – more than 2 tiles of the same type are connected

incorrect terrain placement – there are more than 4 tiles in a continuous group

The maps proposed on page 13 are symmetrical, but players are free to experiment with other types of unusual maps and scenarios! Every new setup allows the players to play in a different manner and make better use of special abilities of their colonies.
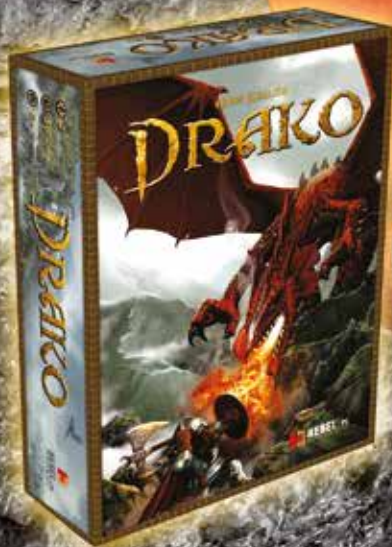
presentation of all the tokens used in the game and their differences

SUMMARY

PREPARING FOR PLAY:

1. Players place terrain tiles and neutral Mounds according to the chosen terrain setup (see pg. 13) or the rules of setting up a map (see pg. 14).

2. Players choose their colonies. If they cannot decide, assign colors randomly.

3. The starting player is chosen randomly. Each player draws 3 random tokens.

4. Players place their Mounds on the board in the correct order.

TURN STRUCTURE:

1. Reproduction phase:
– placing a new token on the board
– drawing a new token from the stack (3 in hand)

2. Movement phase:
– move one unit up to its movement allowance
– attack (the last hex entered)

GAME END:

The game ends when no player has termite tokens left in their hand.

VICTORY:

The player with the highest score wins – each player adds up the value of all their (captured + placed + in hand) Mounds.