



**STRATEGIC TILE GAME**

**RULE BOOK**

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to **ZU Tiles: Hime!**  
We're glad you're here.

**ZU Tiles: Hime** is a strategic tile placement game loosely based on the creatures of the Chinese Zodiac. With this 2-player Starter Set, each player will choose a pre-constructed deck (*either the Dragon, Snake, Rooster deck or the Rat, Ox, Monkey deck*) to see who between them can outthink and outplay the other. Players earn points by creating patterns of compatible creatures or by capturing opposing creatures. The first player to 12 points wins!

## HAPPY PLAYING!



# THE ANATOMY OF A ZU TILE

## TILE NAME

## TILE ICON

Graphically identifies the type of tile, i.e Creature Class, Item, Obstacle, Action, etc.

## TILE TYPE

## COMPATIBILITY ICONS

Identifies which creatures the tile is compatible with.

## STRENGTH VALUE (STR)

## INTELLIGENCE VALUE (INT)

## TILE CODE

## TILE DESCRIPTION

This may either be a description of what a tile can do or instructions on what a player can do. Sometimes this has a number at the end called the 'Maximum Tile Number' (please see Maximum Tile Number on Page 20).



# EQUIPMENT & PLAYERS



## PLAYERS

2 Players



## TILES

This Starter Set has 2 decks: A Dragon, Snake, Rooster (DSR) deck and a Rat, Ox, Monkey (ROM) deck. Each deck has 40 tiles. One deck can be found under the Action placeholder tiles when the box is first opened. The other deck can be found under the Reaction placeholder tiles when the box is first opened. If the tiles ever get mixed up you can easily separate them by looking at the **TILE CODE** on the bottom of the tile (*please see The Anatomy of a ZU Tile on Page 3*). All tiles with “DSR” go in one deck. All tiles with “ROM” go in the other. For your convenience reference deck lists can also be found on the last page of this rule book.



## PLAYING AREA

Any flat surface you could play a typical tabletop game on. A 66cm X 66cm (26" X 26") playing area should suffice.



## TO WIN

The first player in a 2-player game to earn 12 points wins the game (*please see 3 and 4 Player Games on Page 19 for games with more than 2 players*).

If a player needs to draw a tile, but they cannot do so because they are out of tiles, they immediately lose the game.

## SETTING UP



After setting aside the 2 Action and 2 Reaction placeholder tiles, each player randomizes the tiles in their deck face down. They then make **5 Draw Stacks** of tiles directly in front of them, face down. **Each Draw Stack must have 8 tiles in it.**



Each player then draws 5 tiles. Each tile can be drawn from any of their Draw Stacks. After each player has drawn their 5 tiles they should check their starting hand. Each player should have at least 1 Dragon, Snake, Rooster, Rat, Ox, or Monkey in their starting hand. If they do not have one of those tiles in their starting hand they should reshuffle their tiles, makes 5 new Draw Stacks and draw again.

**!** For a 2-player game the playing area should look similar to the diagram below:



**DRAW STACKS:** The stacks where a player draws their tiles from.



**POINT PILE:** The pile that tiles are placed onto to represent the player's points.



**DISCARD PILE:** The pile that tiles are placed onto after being used or discarded.



# TILE TYPES

## THE TILE TYPES OF ZU TILES: HIME

### 1 CREATURES

**ZU Tiles: Hime** is loosely based on the 12 creatures of the Chinese Zodiac and it is those creatures that are at the core of the game.



However, with this particular Starter Set we will be focusing only on 6 of the 12 creatures. One deck will consist of **Dragon, Snake, and Rooster**. The other deck will consist of **Rat, Ox, and Monkey**.

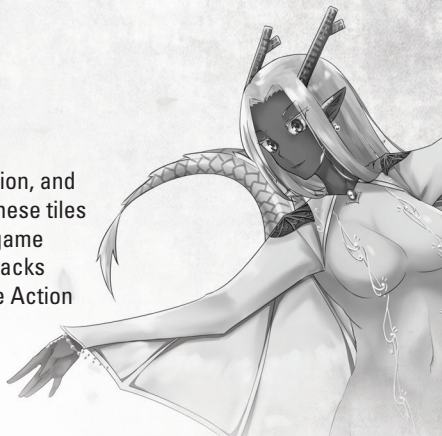


**GAME NOTE:** You may not attack or capture creatures you control. If ever something causes a player to capture a creature they control place that creature in their discard pile instead.

## 2 ACTIONS/REACTIONS



There are Action, Reaction, and Action/Reaction tiles. These tiles allow you to affect the game through Basic Action Stacks (see Page 12) and Battle Action Stacks (see Page 14).



## 3 ITEMS & OBSTACLES



Items



Obstacles

Items are generally tiles with special abilities. Obstacles are tiles generally used to block spaces and/or represent danger.

### ! GAME NOTES:

- Items and Obstacles may not be declared an Attacker or be used as an Ally in a Battle.
- Items and Obstacles may be attacked by their controller.
- Any Creature neighboring an Item and Obstacle can ally in its defense.
- If an Item or Obstacle loses in a Battle it is discarded.

# GAME TURN

During a player's turn they can do any, some, or all of the following optional actions one time and in any order they choose.

- **Place a tile with STR and INT into the playing area** (an example could be a Creature, Item, or Obstacle)
- **Start a Basic Action Stack** (*please see Basic Action Stack on Page 12*)
- **Start a second Basic Action Stack**
- **Start a Battle** (*please see Battle Action Stack on Page 12*)
- **Discard 2 tiles to draw 1 new tile**

After a player completes all the actions they want for their turn, they must draw a tile from one of their Draw Stacks in front of them. If the player took no actions on their turn they may draw one additional tile. That ends their turn and begins the next player's turn.

## ! GAME NOTES:

**Spaces:** New, empty spaces are immediately created on all sides of a tile after a tile is either put into play or when a tile has moved into a space. Spaces do not exist unless they are in a Neighbor position (*please see Time Out: Neighbors on Page 9*) to, or under, a tile currently in the playing area. Tiles that are moving into a new space immediately create new Neighboring spaces around them as they move.



# OVERVIEW OF PLAY

To play a tile, take it from your hand and place it face up in the playing area. Only tiles with **STRENGTH (STR)** and **INTELLIGENCE (INT)** values, that are not an Action, Reaction, or Action/Reaction tile, may be placed directly into the playing area. The first tile played starts the game and should be placed in the very center of the playing area. Make sure that when placing tiles in the playing area, they always face the player who placed the tile. After the first tile is played, each subsequent tile must be placed in a **NEIGHBORING** space to another tile (*please see Time Out: Neighbors below*).



## GAME NOTES:

- Creatures do **NOT** have to be compatible in order to be placed next to each other in the playing area.
- Compatibility is only checked when **COMPLETING A SQUARE** (*please see Time Out: Compatible Creatures on Page 11*).



## TIME OUT

### NEIGHBORS

Tiles that touch side-by-side are Neighbors.



**TIGER** and **PIG** are  
**Neighbors**.



**TIGER** and **RAM**  
are **NOT** Neighbors.



Only the **RAM** and **RABBIT**  
are **Neighbors** to the **TIGER**.

# SCORING POINTS

There are 2 primary ways to score points in ZU Tiles: Hime.

- 1** Complete a square of compatible Creatures (*please see Time Out: Compatible Creatures on Page 11*)
- 2** Win a Battle against an opponent's Creature and capture it (*please see How To Battle on Page 15*)



Not a  
complete  
square



A complete square

## COMPLETING A SQUARE OF COMPATIBLE CREATURES

If you are the player who places the final tile in a way that creates a square of 4 Creatures (which can include Creatures your opponent controls) you have “completed a square”. Next, check to see if you had “completed a square of compatible Creatures” (*please see Time Out: Compatible Creatures on Page 11*).

Then, if you have indeed completed a square where all the Creatures in the square are compatible with their Neighbors in the square, remove all the tiles in the square from the playing area and place those tiles in your Point Pile. Score 1 point for each tile placed in your Point Pile this way.

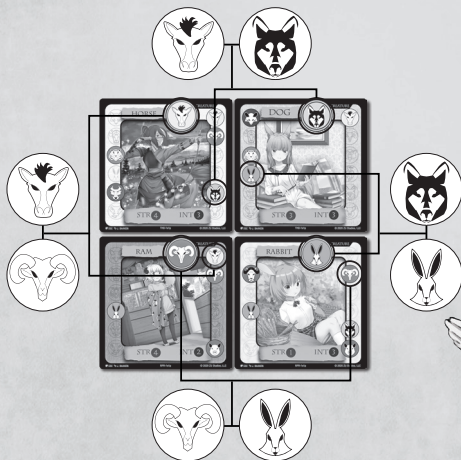


## TIME OUT

# COMPATIBLE CREATURES

If a Compatibility Icon (one of the smaller Creature Icons located on the left or right of a Creature tile) matches the Tile Icon (the larger Creature Icon with a gold ring at the top of a Creature tile) of a Neighboring tile then those two tiles are compatible.

If a 4 tile square is ever formed where each tile in the square is compatible with its Neighbors in the square, then a Compatible Square has been formed.



# BASIC ACTION STACKS

A Basic Action Stack is a stack of tiles separate from the tiles in the playing area. A Basic Action Stack is the method by which players can use their Action, Reaction, and/or Action/Reaction tiles.

A Basic Action Stack starts with the player whose turn it is deciding they would like to play an Action Tile (that they have in their hand). That player would then take that Action Tile and lay it face up off to the side of the playing area.

That action starts a Basic Action Stack.

Then, the opponent may react to the Action Tile being played by adding a Reaction Tile, if they have one, physically on top of the Basic Action Stack.

## STRATEGY SPOTLIGHT:

Action tiles can allow you to “move” existing tiles to help complete a scoring square or to “flee” a battle.



Tile starts the **Basic Action Stack**

Tiles can be used as either (A) or (AR) Tiles

Tiles are placed on top of the initial (A) Tile



### GAME NOTES:

Some Action, Reaction, and Action/Reaction tiles have a STR and INT value. Those tiles must be put into play by way of an Action Stack. They may not be placed directly into the playing area as one of the actions a player can do on their turn.



**EXAMPLE:** Isaac and Kenny are playing a game. On Isaac's turn he wants to play one of his Action Tiles. He places the Action Tile he wants to play from his hand, face up, and off to the side of the playing area. Kenny can now place a Reaction Tile face up and directly on top of Isaac's Action Tile. Isaac can then place a Reaction Tile on top of Kenny's Reaction Tile. And so on and so on. The Basic Action Stack then continues to grow this way until both players no longer can or want to add any more Reaction Tiles to the Basic Action Stack.

Then, working from the top tile down, one after the other, each player performs the instructions on the tile they placed on the Basic Action Stack.

If for some reason the instructions on a tile can not be completed, the tile is simply placed in the Discard Pile of the person who played it.

After the instructions on a tile is completed the tile is placed into the Discard Pile of the player who played it.

# BATTLE ACTION STACKS

A Battle Action Stack is very similar to a Basic Action Stack. It allows players to use Reaction, and/or Action/Reaction tiles to either help or hinder a Battle that is about to take place. In order to start a Battle (*also see How To Battle on Page 15*) a player must choose a Creature they control in the playing area. That creature is the Attacker. Then they must name a tile neighboring the Attacker that is not a Creature they control. That tile is the Defender.

Then the attacking player must choose ANY tile in their hand and place it FACE DOWN, off to the side of the playing area.

That face down tile represents a Battle Action Tile that works exactly like a regular Action Tile. This means that after the Battle Action Tile is placed down, a Battle Action Stack is created. Next, Reaction Tiles can be added face up on the stack just like they would be with a Basic Action Stack.

Then, from there, everything progresses exactly the same as a Basic Action Stack except that when the Battle Action Tile is reached at the bottom of the stack, it is discarded and there is a comparison between the **STR** and **INT** of the attacking tile (or team) and defending tile (or team).



**STRATEGY SPOTLIGHT:** Engaging in battle allows you to clear spaces on the “grid” so that you can place a compatible creature in that space that would benefit your scoring square. It also gets you a point!

## BATTLE



### TIME OUT

One way to score points is to capture a Creature, or Creatures, controlled by your opponent(s). You can also cause Items and Obstacles to be discarded from the playing area by defeating them in Battle.

## HOW TO BATTLE

- 1 Choose a Creature you control (the Attacker) and select a tile **NEIGHBORING** the Attacker that is not a Creature you control (the Defender).
- 2 Start and complete a “Battle Action Stack” (*please see Page 14*)
- 3 Then, once the Battle Action Tile is reached at the bottom of the Battle Action Stack and is discarded (and if the Attacker and Defender are still **Neighbors**), compare the **STR** and **INT** values of both tiles.
- 4 If either tile has **BOTH** greater **STR AND INT** than the other tile, it wins the Battle and the defeated Creature, along with any allies, is captured. Otherwise the Battle is a draw.

- 5 The player who won the Battle places the captured Creature, along with any allies, into their **POINT PILE**. When a Creature is in a Point Pile it is worth 1 point. If an Item or Obstacle is defeated, it is discarded.



If a Pig and Rabbit battled, the Pig would win. This is because the Pig is **BOTH** stronger (3 vs1) **AND** smarter (4 vs 3) than the Rabbit.

"You want to consider where you place creatures because you can form allies that help you succeed in battle. Allies are especially important because you need to win in both strength and intelligence" - Rebecca (Board Game Banter)



## TIME OUT

### ALLIES

After the Attacker and Defender are chosen, but before the Battle Action Tile is placed down, both players have the option to identify Allies from Creatures they control (and in a multi-player game they may ask for Allies from other players). Allies can only be identified/chosen from tiles neighboring the Defender. Once the **Battle Action Tile** is placed down all Allies are locked into the Battle on their chosen side.

- 1** First the defending player may identify Allies to help their tile in Battle. Then the attacking player may identify Allies to help their tile in Battle.
- 2** If during the resolution of the Battle Action Stack a Creature is moved to a space neighboring the Defender, the controller of the moved Creature may decide if that Creature will join the Battle, and which side it will join on, when the Battle Action Tile is reached.
- 3** If a tile has any Allies, it simply adds the **STR** and **INT** values of those Allies to its own when a Battle takes place. If a tile that has Allies is defeated, then all Allies of the defeated tile are captured.

If the 🐰 is attacked by the 😊, the 😊 can not help and become an Ally to the 🐰. This is because the 😊 is not a Neighbor to the 🐰.



## MORE GAME INFORMATION

### TILES PLACED ON OR UNDER ANOTHER TILE

If a tile is placed on or under another tile, it is considered “attached” to the tile it was placed on or under. If something causes a tile to move, then all tiles “attached” to it move as well. If a tile leaves the playing area or is considered ‘out of play’, any tiles attached to it that did not cause the ‘out of play’ effect are immediately discarded.

### ICONS AND WORDS THAT DESCRIBE ICONS ARE INTERCHANGEABLE

The word “Obstacle” for instance, is always interchangeable with 🐻.

### A BATTLE DOESN'T ALWAYS HAVE A WINNER

If the Attacker and Defender are no longer neighbors when the Battle Action Tile is reached, the Battle does not take place. However the Battle Action Tile is still discarded.

### ALLIES

If a tile that is an Ally is no longer a Neighbor to the Defender when the Battle Action Tile is reached, then that tile can no longer be an Ally in the Battle.



# MORE GAME INFORMATION

## TILE TEXT VS RULE BOOK

If it ever seems like a tile description is contradicting the rule book, proceed with the tile description. Some tiles are designed to be exceptions to the rules outlined in the rule book.

## PLAYERS MAY ONLY REPLACE TILES THEY CONTROL

Some tiles say they must replace another tile to be put into play. Players may only replace tiles they control with a tile from their hand. When replacing tiles, all tiles that were attached to the tile being replaced are now attached to the new tile. Tiles that have been replaced are put into the Discard Pile of the player who started the game with the tile in their deck.

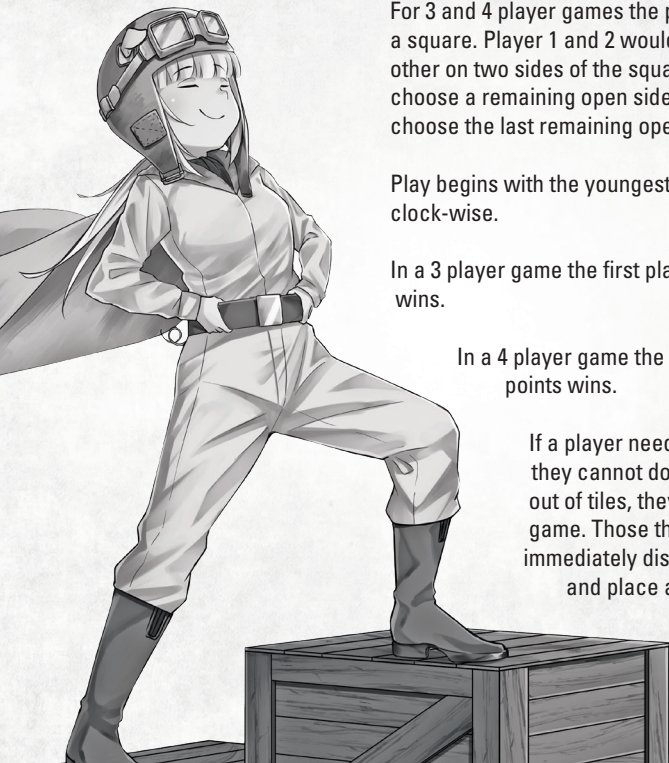
## STRENGTH OF 0 (ZERO)

If any tile's **STR** ever reaches 0, immediately place it in the Discard Pile of the player who started the game with the tile in their deck.

## PLACEHOLDER TILES

The game comes with 4 placeholder tiles (2 Action, 2 Reaction). These tiles are used as placeholders for when a tile in the playing area allows you to do an Action or Reaction. Use these tiles to represent those effects on a Basic Action Stack or a Battle Action Stack.





### 3 AND 4 PLAYER GAMES

For 3 and 4 player games the playing area should be a square. Player 1 and 2 would sit across from each other on two sides of the square. Player 3 would choose a remaining open side. And player 4 would choose the last remaining open side.

Play begins with the youngest player and rotates clock-wise.

In a 3 player game the first player to get to 10 points wins.

In a 4 player game the first player to get to 9 points wins.

If a player needs to draw a tile but they cannot do so because they are out of tiles, they immediately lose the game. Those that lose the game must immediately discard their entire hand and place all tiles they control in the playing area into their Discard

# MORE GAME INFORMATION

Pile. For the remainder of the game if a player who has lost ever receives control of a tile in the playing area it is immediately placed into their Discard Pile.

## **CUSTOMIZED DECK CONSTRUCTION**

Customized deck construction for ZU Tiles is meant to be as free and open as possible. Here are the very limited rules.

- 1) A deck must consist of at least 5 tiles.
- 2) No maximum deck size.
- 3) Whatever the deck size, before play, the deck must be randomized and divided into 5 draw stacks.
- 4) Before play begins no draw stack can have a greater than 1 tile difference from any other draw stack created out of the same deck.
- 5) Some tiles have a 'Maximum Tile Number' in their Tile Description. If

same-named tiles, starting the game from the same deck and in greater number than the lowest Maximum Tile Number on any one of them, ever end up in any player's Point and/or Discard Pile, the player playing the deck those tiles originated from may not win the game and immediately loses the game.

## **PAYING COSTS**

Some tiles say they 'cost' something in order to play. That generally means putting something in the Discard Pile. For example: If something costs 1 point to play then you would take a tile representing 1 point from your Point Pile and place it in your Discard Pile.

## **ROUNDING NUMBERS**

Unless explicitly stated otherwise, rounding is always done to the nearest whole number using the general rules of rounding (0, 1, 2, 3, 4 rounds down and 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 rounds up).



### **STR AND INT VALUES IN THE DISCARD PILE**

When a tile has STR and INT values, and is in the Discard Pile, those values are considered 0 while in the Discard Pile.

### **END OF TURN EFFECTS**

If there are multiple end of turn effects that would somehow interfere with each other, the order in which they are resolved lies in the order that they were created; with the first end of turn effect resolving first, second one created resolving second, and so on.

### **IF A CREATURE YOU CONTROL LOSES A BATTLE TO AN ITEM OR OBSTACLE YOU CONTROL**

The Creature and any attacking allies are discarded.

## CREDITS

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53C

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Stacie Wilkerson

### Rule Book Design Edits

Big League Creative (Brian Hostetler)



## REFERENCE DECK LISTS

### **Rat, Ox, Monkey Deck:**

8 Rat  
7 Monkey  
7 Ox  
2 Banana Barrage  
2 Monkey Swing  
2 Pull  
2 Sewer System  
1 Contagion  
1 Impervious  
1 Leader of the Pack  
1 Mind Control  
1 Mosey On  
1 Revive  
1 Sapphire Monkey Totem  
1 Stampede  
1 Taunt  
1 Biased Judgement

### **Dragon, Snake, Rooster Deck:**

8 Rooster  
7 Snake  
6 Dragon  
2 Explosive Egg  
2 Golden Egg  
2 Time Alone  
1 Constrict  
1 Crow Blast  
1 Diamond Rooster Totem  
1 Dragon's Hoard  
1 Egg Pelt  
1 Happy Rooster  
1 Hypnotic Glare  
1 Rattle  
1 Reversal of Fortune  
1 Revive  
1 Slither  
1 Upset Whelp  
1 Wingspan



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