

The Great Khan Game Great Rules Rewrite

Intro:

I bought The Great Khan Game when it came out and I was 12-years-old. I'd never seen anything like it, and my friends and I enjoyed playing it for years, relishing in its combination of diplomacy and war, quirky humor, and unexpected, game-shattering events. With time, I had moved away from gaming and the game remained as a childhood memory. Fast-forward to 2019, my interest in games is rekindled, and that fire is heavily fueled by covid and spending so much time at home. My brother tracks down a copy of the game and buys it for me. I play it, and it's still a ton of fun, but its age is showing. Games have changed a LOT over 35 years, and some parts of the game creak a little, although it's still a great game at heart. I try my hand at some probability analysis and mess with the rules for conducting war. I bring it to the gaming group I've joined to try out the new rules, and over a few sessions they raise some other concerns and we spitball ideas and playtest a little. These rules changes are a result of those sessions.

These changes are meant to address three major issues I had with the game, as well as some minor ones. The major issues were:

1. There is a little too much randomness in the card draw. This brought about the idea of the market.
2. Resolving wars was too long and difficult to keep track of which cards need to save, which cards got defeated, etc. The new rules attempt to streamline the war resolution while maintaining similar probabilities as the original rules.

3. Scoring encouraged the creation of small and unstable countries, especially as game-end drew near. I wanted to encourage the creation of stable countries and reward investing in a few countries instead of spreading thin.

The rules below only address the changed rules, and are not a comprehensive ruleset. Unless otherwise stated, all the rules of the original game remain as they are. In some specific cases, I reiterated the game rules to provide context.

These rules require the use of d20's in addition to the d6's required by the original game. D6's are still used for some effects as in the original, but the resolution of war is now done with d20's exclusively. I took a cue from Oath and got several blue and several red d20's which allow both sides in war to roll their dice simultaneously.

I want to be very clear - I did not try to balance The Great Khan to the standards of a modern strategy game. The game is chaotic and swingy by nature, and I think that's part of its charm. I have also not playtested these rules extensively. They're an attempt to streamline the game and make it breezier, while rounding some of the rougher edges. Any input from anyone else who plays these rules is highly welcome.

I'd like to thank Nate, Nick, Patrick, Rose and Sam from Brooklyn-Based Board Games for playing and helping finalize these rules. Also all the folks on BGG that helped me with my shaky probability math. And finally, a huge thanks to Tom Wham for creating such a wonderful game, one that I believe was way ahead of its time. It (and other Wham games) are at the heart of many great childhood memories, and the Great Khan continues to be delightful.

Part I - The Market

SETUP CHANGES:

After dealing cards to all players, form a market of four cards from the deck next to the map. There should be no events in the market, so if one is drawn, draw a replacement and then shuffle the event back into the deck.

USING THE MARKET:

After paying for cards and drawing their cards for the turn, each player has a chance to buy one (and only one) card from the market. The cost depends on the position of the card in the market:

*2gp for the first card

*4gp for the second card

*8gp for the third card

*16gp for the fourth card

If a player buys a market card they add it to their hand as if they drew it.

REFRESHING THE MARKET:

At the end of the player's turn, before they discard a card, the market refreshes:

1. If the player bought a card, all cards in a position above that card shift down one position. Then, a new card is drawn and placed in the 16gp position.
2. If the player did not buy a market card, the card in the 2gp spot gets discarded, and then the remaining cards shift down one position, and a new card is drawn and placed in the 16gp position.

If the card drawn is an event, it is resolved immediately (it's still the player's turn, if any choices need to be made), and is then replaced by a new card.

Part II - War

LAND WAR:

When a player declares a land war, they plot an overland route from any number of their countries to one defending country. The attacking player may commit any number of sword-cards to the offensive.

The attacker and defender each roll 1d20 for each sword (on the attacker's side) and each sword and castle (on the defender's side) displayed on their participating cards. If any cards have special bonuses, their dice should be rolled separately.

To defeat enemy cards, the player needs to roll equal to or higher than the card's defense value, listed in the table below.

The players do not target specific cards. Once the dice are rolled, each player decides which of their own cards gets defeated, with the only caveat that cards must be defeated if they can be.

For example: if the attacker has a 1-sword card and a 2-sword card, and the defender rolled a 13, the attacker must defeat their 1-sword card. Similarly, if the defender rolled a 14, the attacker must defeat their 2-sword card.

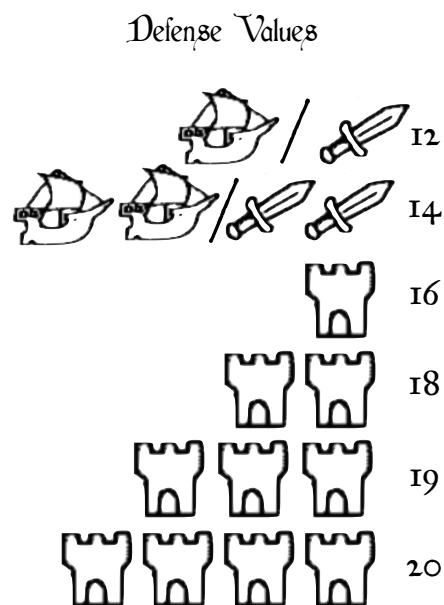
When more than one card are eligible for defeat, the player who controls the cards can choose which card to defeat.

Attacker and defender roll their dice simultaneously, and eliminations happen after all dice are rolled.

The war can end in one of several ways:

1. **VICTORY!** If the attacker defeats all of the defending country's sword- castle- and ship-cards, they win the war, and take all remaining cards from that country's meld to their hand. They may meld that country immediately if they so wish.
2. **RETREAT!** The attacker can choose to end the war.
3. **DEFEAT!** If the attacker loses more cards than the defender in a single round of combat, the war ends. Not cards change hands. Defeat also happens if the attacker loses all their sword-cards that are participating in the war.
4. **STAND-OFF.** If two consecutive rounds pass with no cards being defeated, the war ends. No cards change hands.

If war has not ended, the attacker can choose to continue the war.



NAVAL WAR:

A player when declare a naval war by using any combination of ship- and sword- cards from any number of their countries. Each ship-card may only carry one sword-card (regardless of the number of ships or swords displayed on the cards).

If the defending country has no ship-cards, the sides proceed to land war. Attacking ships do not participate.

If the defending country has ships, each player rolls 1d20 for each ship displayed on their cards. If any cards have special bonuses, their dice should be rolled separately.

To defeat enemy cards, the player needs to roll equal to or higher than the card's defense value, listed in the table above.

The players do not target specific cards. Once the dice are rolled, each player decided which of their cards gets defeated, with the only caveat that cards must be defeated if they can be.

For example: if the attacker has a 1-ship card and a 2-ship card, and the defender rolled a 13, the attacker must defeat their 1-ship card. Similarly, if the defender rolled a 14, the attacker must defeat their 2-ship card.

When more than one card are eligible for defeat, the player who controls the cards can choose which card to defeat. If a ship card that is carrying sword-cards is defeated, those sword-cards are also defeated.

Attacker and defender roll their dice simultaneously, and eliminations happen after all dice are rolled.

The naval war can end in one of several ways:

1. **VICTORY!** If the attacker defeats all of the defending country's ship-cards, they win the naval war and proceed to land war.
2. **RETREAT!** The attacker can choose to end the naval war.
3. **DEFEAT!** If the attacker loses more ship-cards than the defender in a single round of combat, the naval war ends. Sword-cards carried by ships do not count towards this condition. Not cards change hands. Defeat also happens if the attacker loses all their ship-cards that are participating in the war.
4. **STAND-OFF.** If two consecutive rounds pass with no cards being defeated, the naval war ends. No cards change hands.

If war has not ended, the attacker can choose to continue the war.

OTHER WAR RELATED RULES:

Defeated cards do not go to the bottom of the discard pile. They are removed from the game entirely.

Any card or rule that gives a bonus or penalty to the die roll is doubled.

For example, a general that gives a +2 bonus on their cards now gives a +4 bonus. Crossing rivers or mountains gives a -2 penalty, if playing with that optional rule.

Cards that give bonus to the Saving Throw increase the cards's defense value by the same amount.

Cards and effects that require a card to make a Saving Throw (for example, the Isle Broddick spell “Storm”) are now resolved by rolling a d20 and trying to beat the card’s defense value.

Cards that attack and defend with different values (e.g. The Ram, Sea Demon) roll d20’s based on their attack value, but have a defense value based on how they defend.

Resolve Peasant Revolt event under the new rules. The peasants will not retreat, but their revolt can end in defeat if they lose more “cards” than the defending country, or it can end in a stand-off if two rounds go by with no defeats.

Part III - Scoring

When the game ends, all players discard any special cards and mercenary cards melded to their countries. Then, each country scores based on the number of cards melded to it: 1 point for the first card, 2 for the second, 3 for the third, etc. The score values for up to six cards are listed below. Each player sums up the score for each of their countries and add that to any gold they still have. This is their final score.

# of cards	point value
1	1
2	3
3	6
4	10
5	15
6	21

Part IV - Isle Broddick

A player that controls Isle Broddick may attempt to cast only one spell a turn. They must declare which spell they want to cast and then roll a d6 equal to or higher than the spell number. If the roll fails, the spell fizzles.

The spell Lead to Gold now generated 1d20 gold instead of the original rules.

Part V - Game End

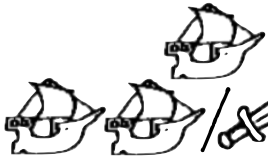
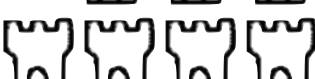
There are two options for the game-end trigger:

1. **SHORT GAME:** the “Shuffle” event is shuffled into the bottom half of the draw deck. As soon as it is revealed, the “Historian” event is then shuffled into the remaining draw deck. The discard pile and defeated cards are not shuffled into the deck.

2. **LONG GAME:** the “Shuffle” event is shuffled into the bottom half of the draw deck. As soon as it is revealed, the draw deck, discard pile and “Historian” event are shuffled to form a new draw deck. Defeated cards are not shuffled into the deck.

Appendix - Player Aids

The aids below summarize the game flow and war rules. Smaller aids are also provided for the defense values, game end scoring and Isle Broddick spells. The aids are designed to be printed on letter size paper, cut to size and glued back to back so you end up with two large and two small ones.

Defense Values	END GAME
  12	Short - shuffle Historian into draw pile when Shuffle is revealed.
  14	Long - shuffle Historian, draw pile and discard. Do not shuffle destroyed pile.
 16	
 18	SCORING
 19	Current gp as base.
 20	Each meld: 1 gp for first card, 2 gp for second card, etc. Discard all mercenaries, items, etc.

ISLE BRODDICK SPELLS	ISLE BRODDICK SPELLS
1 - Imp: steal a random card from someone's hand	5 - Poem of Power: draw extra 1d6 cards
2 - Spell of Illusion: double swords and ships for one country for one turn	6 - Lead to Gold: collect 1d20 gold
3 - Storm: all ships must roll against defense	WIZARD casts 1-6
4 - Poison Cloud: All cards in one country must roll 2d6 ≥ 7	SILIDON casts 1-4 (1-5 with crystal ball)
	APPRENTICE casts 1-2 (1-3 with crystal ball)
	Must announce spell first and roll ≥ spell # on d6.

== {{Meld}} ==

1. Cards must belong to same country.
2. Leader card must have one or more flags.
3. All cards must follow leader.

== {{Coups}} ==

1. Player melds a country controlled by another so it has more flags. Meld must be legal on its own.
2. Defending player may meld new cards as a defense.
3. Winner takes loser's cards.
4. Winner may meld immediately.

== {{Caravans}} ==

1. One share per country in the route.
2. One share per moneybag card melded.
3. One share per pirate ship melded in the route.
4. The Bandit Kingdom (Zagrus 7+9 melded separately) steals half shares of every caravan.

== {{Setup}} ==

3 gp

6 cards (8 cards if 5 or more players)

== {{TurnOrder}} ==

1. Collect 2gp/melded country and 3gp/mine. 1 gp if no countries.
2. Pay 2gp for extra card, 6gp for two, 14gp for three, etc (double price each time).
3. Draw 2 cards from deck or 1 card from discard plus extra cards (from either). Cannot draw past events in discard.
4. Buy market card (2/4/8/16gp) if desired.
5. Resolve events.
6. Play cards into melds, including taking cards back into hand.
7. Coups (once a turn).
8. War (once a turn).
9. Meld extra cards. Taking cards back is not allowed unless melds are no longer valid.
10. Refill/refresh market, resolving events.
11. Discard 1 card from hand.

== {{LandWar}} ==

1. Player declares attacking force of sword cards, from any number of countries they control.
2. Player must chart land course to target country. Can march through neutral countries, needs permission from other countries. If crosses mountains or rivers, all dice are -2.
3. Attacker rolls 1d20 per sword. General bonuses only apply to cards from country melded into.
4. Defender rolls 1d20 per sword and castle.
5. Casualties are removed to defeated pile (after *both* players roll).
6. If attacker lost fewer cards than defender, they may choose to continue the war.
7. War ends after 2 rounds with no defeats.
8. Attacker wins if all swords, castles and ships are defeated. Remaining cards go to their hand.

== {{NavalWar}} ==

1. Player declares attacking force from any number of countries. Each ship card may carry one sword card.
2. If defender has no ships, proceed to land war. Attacking ships do not participate.
3. If defender has ships, attacker rolls 1d20 per attacking ship. Admiral bonuses only apply to cards from country melded into.
4. Defender rolls 1d20 per attacking ship.
5. Casualties are removed to destroyed pile (after *both* players roll). Swords on defeated ships are also defeated.
6. If attacker lost fewer cards than defender, they may choose to continue the naval war.
7. War ends after 2 rounds with no defeats.