

Senet - The Ancient Egyptian Game of the Pharaohs

Compiled by Michael Kandrak on January 27, 2024

1. Movement of Pawns, Set up, and the 1st Two Moves
 - a. You must move a pawn forward on your turn equal to the throw of the sticks result. If a forward move does not exist, a pawn must be selected to move backwards.
 - b. Dark pieces are placed on the even numbered squares and the light pieces set up on the odd number squares.
 - c. The player who first throws a one moves the dark piece on Square 10 one space and will play with the dark pieces.
 - d. The other player throws the sticks and must move the pawn on Square 9.
 - e. After this the players can move any of their pieces.
2. Throwing the Four Sticks
 - a. One white, three black - One space forward, throw again
 - b. Two white, two black - Two spaces forward, end turn
 - c. Three white, one black - Three spaces forward, end turn
 - d. Four white - Four spaces forward, throw again
 - e. Four black - Five spaces forward, throw again
3. Six Special Squares
 - a. 15 - House of Life and 26 - House of Beauty are safe
 - b. 26 - House of Beauty is a required stop for all pawns before they can advance beyond Square 26
 - c. 27 - House of Water is a penalty space. Players will only move a pawn to this space if forced. On the

next turn the player must either attempt a bearing off with a Four result or retreat to Square 15 (House of Life). If Square 15 is occupied then the pawn is placed on the next closest lower square.

- d. 28 - House of Three Judges, 29 - House of Two Men and 30 - House of Horus are not safe squares
- e. 28 - Must remain here until attacked or a 3 is thrown
- f. 29 - Must remain here until attacked or a 2 is thrown
- g. 30 - Must remain here until attacked or any throw results in the pawn being born off.

4. Attacking, Protected Pawns and Blockades

- a. A pawn that is not adjacent to a pawn of the same color is vulnerable to being bumped back by an opposing pawn landing on its square except when occupying Squares 15 or 26. Attacker and attacked switch squares.
- b. Pawns of the same color that are adjacent are safe from attack.
- c. Three or more pawns that are adjacent form a blockade. They are both safe and impassable.
- d. If a pawn is attacked on Squares 28 (Three Judges), 29 (Two Men) or 30 (Horus) it must move to the House of Water. If that space is occupied, it must retreat to 15. (See 3.c above)

5. Bearing Off

- a. Pawns cannot be born off until all 5 of a player's pawns have moved beyond the first 10 squares.
- b. The first player to bear off all five pawns wins immediately.