

Introduction



The stags of Antler Island are getting ready for the rutting season. Only the smartest and strongest will catch the eye of the beautiful does as they head to the best breeding grounds. Always remember, it's not how big your antler is, but what you do with it that counts!

The players each control a different stag located on Antler Island. It is the breeding season and the stags must attempt to mate with as many does as they are able (if playing with younger players, or sensitive adults, the stags can be attempting to kiss the does). As the stags move around the island they will eat to improve their condition, helping them grow antlers and fight! Only the strongest stags will attract enough does to carry on their next generation.

When a player reaches 12 on the doe track (3 player game) or 10 (4 player game) the game will finish at the end of the round. Points are awarded for does and position on the island.

A. Components

- 1 x rules
- 1 x board
- 2 x island layers
- 1 x 3 player island overlay.
- 12 x feet for island layers (4 spare)
- 4 x stags (1 of each colour)
- 14 x does ('doeples')
- 4 x control mats (1 of each colour) *see Fig. 5*

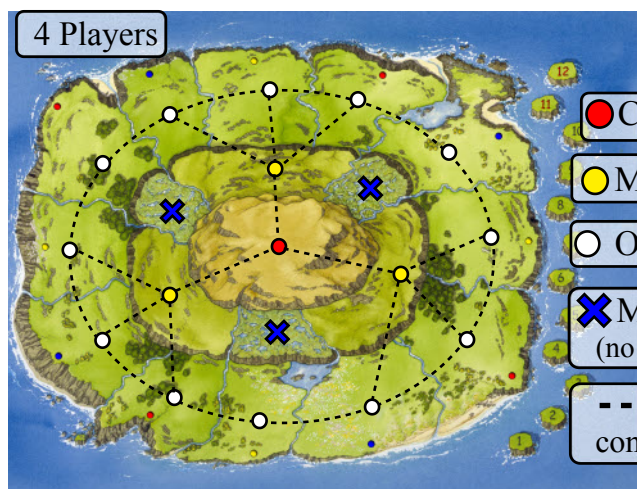


Fig. 1 The 4 player board.

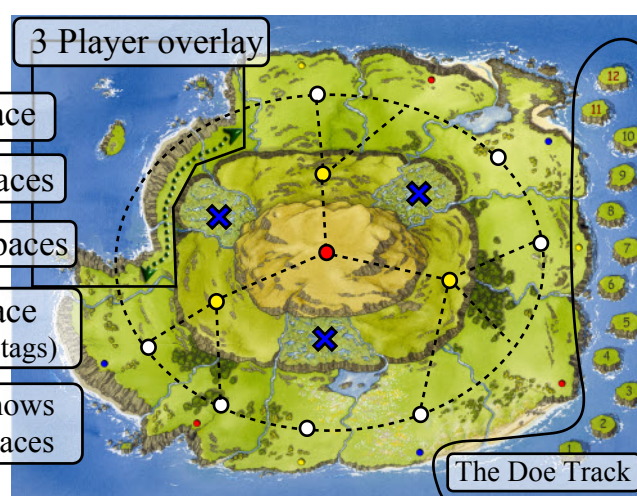


Fig. 2 The 3 player board.

B. Set up

- If playing with 3 players put the 3 player overlay onto the board (*see fig. 2*).
- Attach the feet to the island layers and place onto the board (*see fig. 3*)
- The starting player is the player with the most money on them (the 'dearest player'). They take the starting player marker.
- The doe track markers are placed underneath the doe track.
- Each player takes a control mat and places **two** antler pieces onto the stags head. He also takes a set of control tiles (1,2,3 and X and blank).
- Take 11 (3 player) or 14 (4 players) doeples and place them to the side of the board. These will be the doeple reserve for the rest of the game.
- Separate a 'starting pile' of food tokens from the stock (the remaining tokens will now be referred to as 'the main pile'):
 - for 3 players use 9 tokens - 5 x value 1 tokens and 4 x value 2 tokens
 - for 4 players use 12 tokens - 6 x value 1 tokens and 6 x value 2 tokens

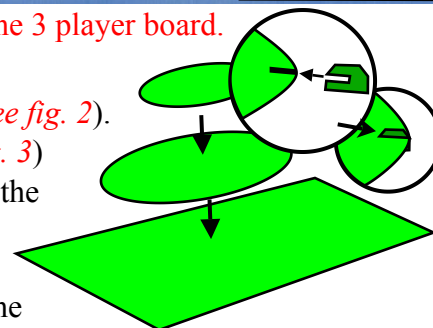


Fig. 3 Putting the board together



- Face down, mix the counters within each pile and place the two piles to the side of the board (still keeping the two piles separate). Keep them face down. When drawing food tokens (at the start of each round, or when playing the 'greedy' wily tile) draw from the starting pile. When this has been exhausted, start drawing from the main pile. When the main pile is exhausted, mix all counters in the discard pile face down to form a new main pile. The starting pile prevents any 3 value food tokens from entering the game early on.
- Each player now takes a food token (from the starting pile) and keeps it face down at the bottom of their control mat. The player may look at the value on the token, but may never show a food token to any other player unless resolving an antler lock (*see fighting C4*).
- Roll the die and check the colour. The starting player places his stag onto an outside space corresponding to that colour. In turn order (clockwise from the starting player), the other players place their stag onto the next available space clockwise which corresponds to the same colour (each colour corresponds to four spaces with 4 players, and three spaces with 3).
- Roll the die again and check the colour (if it is the same colour as the stag placement roll, keep rolling until it is different). Place one food token (from the starting pile), face down, onto each **outside** space corresponding to that colour.
- A doe is now placed onto each empty space (i.e. without a food token or player's stag) except:
 - the wetland spaces (in the middle section of the board), and
 - the centre space on the Island.
- The board should now look something like *fig. 4*.
- The wily tiles (*see C5*) are mixed and placed face down in a pile to the side of the board. The top tile is turned face up and placed to the side of the pile. You are now ready to play!

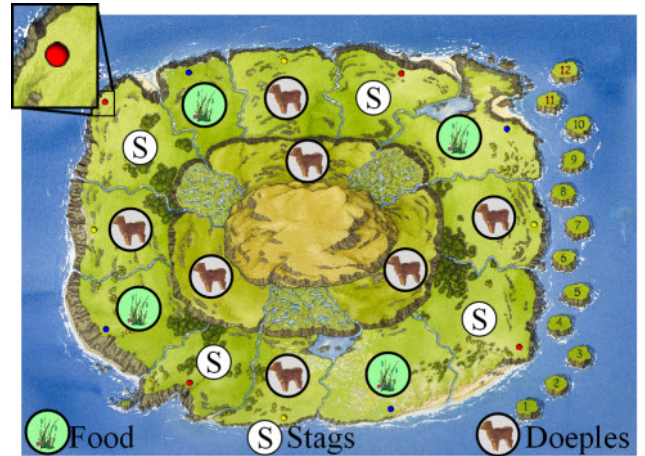


Fig 4. Example set up.
Stags are on red. Food is on blue. Doeple are on yellow.

C. Play

1. Playing a round

Each player simultaneously chooses which actions they will be taking that round by placing their control tiles, face down, beside the available actions on the control mat *see fig 5*. **The blank control tile is a dummy** and is provided to help players disguise the actual actions they have selected. The X can be played out of numbered order. A player may choose any combination for their choices and is not limited to one control tile per action. It is bad form to look at other player's placement before finishing choosing your own actions. Once all players have placed all five of their control tiles the round may begin.

The starting player reveals their first action and carries it out. They have the choice of revealing **either**:

- their lowest available control tile (1 being the lowest, then 2, and then 3), **or**
- their X control tile.

Once a control tile has been used it cannot be used again in the round. The blank tile is not revealed. Once a player has used his X he will no longer have a choice on his next turn and will have to use the lowest available control tile.

A player **must** carry out his action if it is possible. If it is not possible, the player does nothing, but the control tile is considered used.

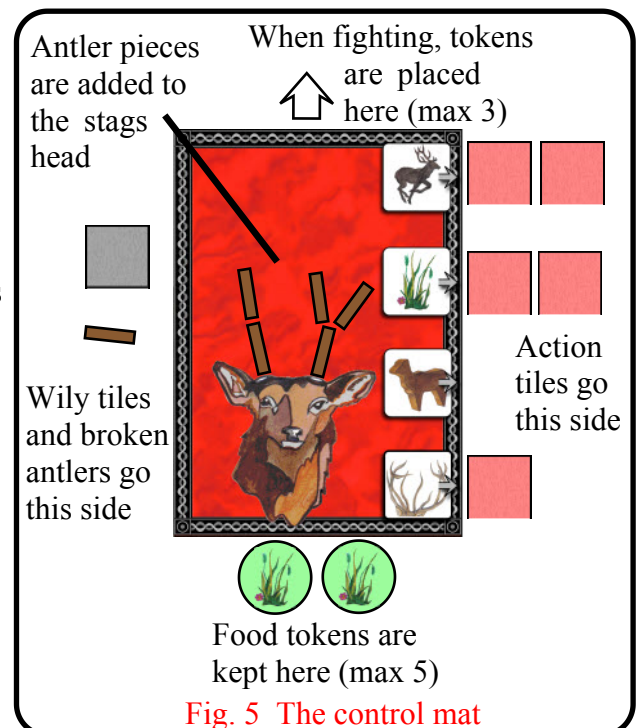


Fig. 5 The control mat



Play continues clockwise with the next player revealing, and carrying out, their first action, and so on, until all players have completed all four of their actions. **This is the end of the round.**

2. The Start of a new round

At the start of each new round (other than the first round) the starting player marker moves round clockwise and then the players:

- Take back all of their control tiles.
- Move all doepleles in the island one space directly up the hill (doepleles may go into wetland areas). There is no limit to the number of does that can be in a space. Doepleles at the top (centre) of the island do not move. *See fig. 6* for an example.
- Roll the die and check the colour. Place one food token on each outer space of that colour. A space can hold a maximum of 2 food tokens. Do not draw for the space if it already has 2 tokens present.
- Check and see how many doepleles are left in the reserve. **Doepleles go onto the board in sets of three (3 players) or four (4 players). A maximum of two sets can be introduced per round.** Roll the die and check the colour. Place one doeplele on each outer space of that colour (a doeplele and food token may appear on the same space). If there are enough doepleles for a second set, roll the die and do the same again (if the die roll is the same as the first set of doepleles, keep rolling until it is a different colour). **If there are not enough doepleles for one set, no doepleles are introduced that round.**
- Players now select their actions and the new round begins.

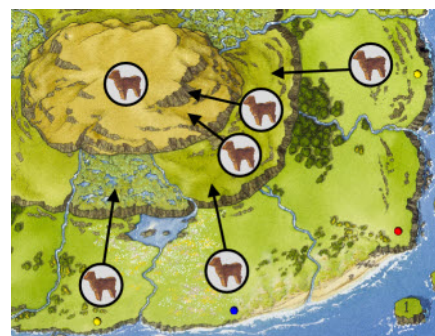


Fig. 6 Above: doepleles move up the hill...

Below: ...and end up here.



3. Actions



Move: The player moves his stag onto an adjacent space. As long as the space is adjacent, stags are able to move up or down the island. **Stags are too heavy for the wetland areas and are not permitted to enter them (see fig. 1).**

If a stag moves into an area containing another stag there is a fight! (see fighting C4)



Eat: There must be a food token in the same space as the stag to carry out this action. The player takes **ALL** (unlike the 'rut' action) food tokens from the space and places them face down at the bottom of their control panel. This food becomes conditioning and is important for growing antlers and fighting. **A player may not have more than five food tokens in their possession.** After five tokens the stag is full up. If the available number of tokens is more than the player can take, they simply take up to their limit and leave the remaining tokens on the board.



Rut: There **must** be a doe in the same space as the stag to carry out this action. The player removes **ONE** doe from this space and places it back into the doe reserve at the side of the board. They then move their marker up one on the doe track (see fig. 2). When a stag reaches 12 (for 3 players), or 10 (for 4 players) the current round will be the final round. A stag may still rut beyond this number. If a player has reached the top of the doe track, they simply keep any further doepleles they mate with beside their control mat. A stag can only mate with one doeplele at a time regardless of the number of doepleles on the space.



Grow antlers: The player may cash in **any** number of their food tokens to grow antlers. The total value of the tokens is added together and then divided by two (rounded down). The player takes this number of antler pieces and adds it to his stag's antlers (see fig. 5). **Cashing in a single token is always worth one antler piece.** Cashed in tokens are placed, face up, in a discard pile beside the board.



e.g. Judi cashes in two food tokens with a combined value of 6 and receives 3 antler pieces.
 Judi cashes in three food tokens with a combined value of 5 and receives 2 antler pieces.
 Judi cashes in one food token value 1 and receives 1 antler piece.

When a stag grows to an even number of antlers (4,6,8 and so on) he receives a wily tile (see C5). This is not applicable if the tile has already been given for that level of growth. It is possible to lose antler pieces when fighting, so a player can reach, for instance, four antlers pieces twice. It is easy to keep track of this by keeping antler pieces lost during fighting at the side of the control panel (see fig. 5). These are used first when growing antlers.

4. Fighting

When a stag moves into a space occupied by another stag there is a confrontation. Only one stag will remain in the space! The stags first square up to one another, but if neither backs down antlers will lock together in combat.

A stags fighting strength is determined by **antler size + fighting condition**.

The sequence of fighting is as follows:

i) The attacker (the stag who moved into the space) chooses the number of food tokens (their condition) that they are going to commit for the fight. They do not have to commit all their food tokens, **but must commit at least one token if they have one**. The attacker may commit a maximum of three tokens to fight with. They are placed face down at the top of their control panel.

ii) The defender (the stag who is currently in the space) then has the choice of retreating or fighting. If they **retreat** the fight is over. If they decide to stand their ground they choose the number of food tokens (their condition) that they are going to commit to the fight. They do not have to commit all their food tokens, **but must commit at least one token if they have one**. The defender may commit a maximum of three tokens to fight with. They are placed face down at the top of their control panel.

iii) The attacker now has the choice of retreating or **locking antlers**! If they **retreat** the fight is over. If they lock antlers the players turn over the committed food tokens. **Each stag adds the value of their token(s) to the number of antler pieces it has**. This results in a fighting strength. The stag with the highest fighting value wins. If both stags have the same fighting strength the result is a **draw**.

Possible outcomes

One stag retreats:

- The retreating player moves his stag to a space without another stag. This may include the space that the attacking stag moved from. **The retreating stag cannot move uphill** unless there is no alternative empty space available.
- The winning stag takes a **wily tile** (see C. 5).
- Both stags retain their food tokens. The retreating stag **must** be heckled by the other players (chicken noises, etc).

Draw:

- The attacker moves back to the space they moved in from.
- All food tokens committed to the fight are lost and placed into the discard pile, face up, beside the main stock.

One stag wins after antlers lock!:

- All committed food tokens are used and placed into the discard pile, face up, beside the main stock.
- The losing stag immediately loses one antler piece from their stag. The lost piece is placed to the side of their control panel.

EXAMPLE FIGHT

Red moves into the same space as yellow. He decides to commit two of his three food tokens to the fight.

Yellow decides not to retreat. He decides to commit all three of his food tokens to the fight.

Red doesn't retreat. The stags reveal their fighting strength.

Red has 5 antlers + 6 in committed tokens giving a total fighting value of 11. Yellow has 4 antlers + 6 in committed tokens giving a total fighting value of 10. Red is the winner.



- The winning stag chases the loser away. **The winning stag gets to place the losing stag onto a space without another stag.** They cannot place the loser any higher up the hill than their own piece, unless there are no other unoccupied spaces.
- The winning stag takes a **wily tile** (see C. 5).

In all cases, play then continues with the next player in turn.

A stag cannot win the game without having won at least one fight (as either attacker or defender)!

When a stag wins a fight for the first time (through the other stag retreating or winning after locking antlers) he takes a 'winning stag token'. It is not possible to lose this token.

5. Wily Tiles

Wily tiles can be gained by:

- **growing antlers or**
- **by winning fights.**

When a player gains a wily tile, they may take the top face down tile **or** the face up one. If they take the face up tile, it is immediately replaced by the next tile from the pile.

The tile taken is placed next to the player's control panel. If the player takes the face up tile it must remain face up, otherwise, the tile is kept face down. Wily tiles are kept to the left of the players control panel.

A player may hold a maximum of three wily tiles. If they take a fourth, they must immediately reduce their tiles down to three by discarding a tile (this may include the one they just picked up).

A player may play tiles at any point during their turn (some tiles need to be played when carrying out an action). A player may play more than one tile on their turn, but may not play two tiles of the same type. Used tiles are placed in a discard pile.

Once the drawing pile is exhausted, the discarded tiles are mixed and used to form a new pile.

The tiles:



Speed - Played when carrying out the move action, this allows the player to move two spaces instead of one. They may not pass through spaces containing other players' stags.



Diamond antler - After locking antlers and losing, the player may use this tile to retain the antler piece he would otherwise lose.



Greedy - Used when carrying out the eat action, this allows the player to take an extra food token from the main stock (in addition to the food tokens gained through the action). They must take, at least, one food token normally to use the tile.



Roar - Play at any time on your turn (before or after your action). Attracts one doeple from each adjacent space. *See fig. 7*



Rut your stuff - Played when carrying out the rut action, allowing the player to rut twice on the same turn. Remember, there will need to be, at least, two doepleles in the stag's space to use this tile.



Rope-a-dope - After locking antlers, the player may use this tile to retain **one** of his committed food tokens.



Fig. 7 The player plays the 'roar' wily tile. He attracts one doeple from each adjacent area.



D. Game End and Scoring

Once any of the stags reach 12 (3 players), or 10 (4 players) on the doe track, the current round will be the final round. The players continue until the round is finished (when all players have carried out all four of their actions) and then count their points.

If a player has not won a single fight (that is, they have not gained a winning stag token), they score no points and lose the game automatically.

The points are awarded as follows:

The doe track:

- 1 point for each doe mated with (shown by the doe track + any extra doeples collected after reaching the top of the track).

Final position on the island: (*see fig. 8*)

- 3 points for being in the centre,
- 1 point for being on a space in the middle part of the island
- No points are awarded for being on an outside space.

If points are tied the tiebreak is resolved in the following order:

largest antlers, highest up the island, condition (value of all remaining food tokens), player height.



Fig.8 Points for final position on the island

The player with the most points is declared 'The Monarch of Antler Island' and wins the game.

The other players should engage in polite applause.

E. Advanced Game - Fighting Cubes (fighting experience)

Once you have played Antler Island a few times you may want to introduce the fighting cubes.

Set up

As normal, but each player takes cubes of his own colour:

- 2 cubes with three players
- 3 cubes with four players



Cubes are kept in open view to the left of the player's control mat.

Play

As normal but, fighting cubes can be won when attacking other stags.

Only an attacking stag may gain a fighting cube. Defending stags may not gain a fighting cube.

In addition to the usual fighting rules, when an **attacker** wins a fight (through the other stag retreating or antler lock) they gain a fighting cube. They take a cube from the losing stag (who retreated or lost after locking antlers).

From the loser, they may take either:

- 1 cube of their own colour (if they have previously lost a cube to this stag) **OR**
- 1 cube of the losing stag's colour.

A stag may not have more than one cube of any colour other than their own. If it is not possible for the player to take a cube (the loser has no suitable cubes available) then no cube is gained by the attacker.

Scoring

As normal, but in addition,

A player scores:

- 1 point for having all of their own cubes.
- 2 points (3 player) or 3 points (4 player) for having a cube from each other player (a full set from the other players). The player does not need to have any of his own cube colour to gain these points.

Have fun and good luck ☺

Fraser and Gordon
(The Lamont Brothers)



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