STEFAN FELD

# IM JAHR DES DRACHEN

"He who has no vision for the small things also blinds himself to the greater design."
*(Confucius, 551 – 479 B.C.)*

## THE GOAL

In this game, **each player** takes on the role of a Chinese prince, seeking to maximize the prosperity and prestige of his province in the ancient China of approximately 1,000 A.D. To assist in these endeavors, the princes must call upon the diverse talents of their courtiers, from scholars and monks to warriors and craftsmen. These loyal subjects will lend their expertise to the struggle to shield their rulers from the often disastrous consequences of the myriad untoward events that plague the populace from month to month. Be it drought, contagion or Mongol invasion, only foresight and planning will spare the princes and their subjects from these fates.
The better a player can manage his province and withstand the seemingly unending onslaught of hazardous events, the more honor and victory points he will have to show for it in the end.

**GOAL**

**Players take on the role of Chinese provincial princes**

**They call upon the assistance of their court personalities to see them through the often troublesome events that befall their provinces**

**The player who best survives these difficult times will have the most victory points to show for it in the end**

## CONTENTS

**1 Game Board**
**60 Cards** (per player: 11 Person Cards and 1 Game Overview)
**90 Person Tiles** (10 each: Craftsmen, Court Ladies, Pyrotechnists, Tax Collectors, Warriors, Monks, Healers, Farmers, Scholars)
**66 Palace Floors**
**36 "Yuan" Coins** (21 silver of value 1, and 15 gold of value 3)
**24 Rice Tiles**
**12 Fireworks Tiles**
**12 Event Tiles** (2 each: Peace, Drought, Contagion, Mongol Invasion, Imperial Tribute, Dragon Festival)
**8 Privilege Tiles** (5 small, 3 large)
**7 Action Cards**
**5 Dragons** (1 per player)
**5 Stands** (1 per dragon)
**5 Scoring Markers** (8-sided markers, 1 per player)
**5 Person Markers** (round markers, 1 per player)



*If you are reading these rules for the first time, we recommend that you disregard the* ***bold*** *text in the boxes on the right-hand side of each page. This text is meant to serve as a quick refresher to help you remember these rules in later games.*

## PREPARATION

*Before your first game, carefully punch out all of the tiles from their frames, and place the dragons in their stands.*

Place **the game board** in the middle of the table. Set up the rest of the pieces as shown in the diagram to the right:

**- The Person Tiles:** First, sort these tiles by their color. Then sort them again according to their level of "experience". Of the 9 types of person tiles, 6 are divided by experience. For the tiles divided in this way, there will be 6 younger, less experienced persons (their tiles have fewer symbols and higher values), and 4 older, more experienced persons (with more symbols and a lower value). Place the older persons in the first row, which contains 2 sections, each with space for 3 tile types. Then place the matching younger persons below them in the second row. The craftsmen (beige), court ladies (ochre) and tax collectors (yellow) only come in the younger version; sort these into piles by type and place them in the three middle spaces of the second row.
*Note: Only in a 5-player game will you place all 10 person tiles of each type on the display. When playing with fewer, return 2 tiles of each type per missing player to the box (1 younger and 1 older for the tiles divided into those groups; and 2 younger for the others – craftsmen, court ladies and tax collectors). This means that, when playing with 4, there will be 8 tiles of each type in the game; with 3, there will be 6 of each; and with 2, there will be 4 of each.*

**- The Event Tiles:** Locate the 2 peace tiles, and place them face up in the first 2 spaces of the event row at the bottom of the board (containing 12 light-colored spaces). Shuffle the remaining 10 tiles face down and draw 1 at a time *randomly*, placing them face up as you go from left to right in the other 10 spaces in the event row. With the exception of the 2 peace tiles, there may never be 2 identical event tiles next to each other, so if you draw 2 of a kind in a row, slide the second one over to the next free space.

**- The 7 Action Cards:** Thoroughly shuffle the 7 action cards and place them in a face down pile in the middle space on the board.

**Each player takes** the following pieces, in the color of his choice:
**- 1 person marker** (round), placing it on the 0 space of the person track (the inner track in the middle of the board);
**- 1 scoring marker** (8-sided), placing it on the 0 space of the scoring track around the outside of the board;
**- 1 dragon** (in a stand), placing it in his playing area;
**- 11 person cards** (of the player's chosen color), forming the player's hand of cards;
**- 1 game overview**, placing it handy near his playing area. The front side shows an overview of the game's phases, and the back side displays the actions and events in brief.

Additionally, each player takes **4 palace floors** and builds *2 palaces with 2 stories* each in his playing area, and takes **6 yuan** (3 silver and 1 gold). *(Each player should place his money next to his palaces for all to see. Players may exchange 1 gold coin with 3 silver coins from the supply at any time during the game.)*

Sort the remaining coins, along with all of the other pieces (palace floors, rice tiles, fireworks tiles, privilege tiles) into a general supply above the board *(see the above diagram to the right)*.

**PREPARATION**

**Place the person tiles on the board** (sorted by younger and older), along with **the event tiles** (2 peace tiles first, then randomly), and the **action cards** (in a face down pile)




1. *The person tiles (1st row, tiles with more symbols; 2nd row, tiles with fewer)*
2. *The discard pile for person cards*
3. *The 7 action cards*
4. *The 12 event tiles (2 peace tiles, then random)*
5. *The scoring markers*
6. *The person markers*

**Each player takes:**
- **1 person marker** (person track)
- **1 scoring marker** (scoring track)
- **1 dragon**
- **11 person cards**
- **1 game overview**
- **4 palace floors** (2 2-story palaces)
- **6 yuan**



**Place the remaining pieces** (money, rice sacks, fireworks, privileges, palace floors) **handy above the board**

**Before the game begins**,
each player must summon his first 2 subjects to court. The oldest player starts. He takes 2 *different* person tiles of his choosing from *the second row* (i.e., the younger persons). In clockwise order, the other players then choose their first 2 persons, following the same restrictions. Additionally, no player may take the *exact same* combination of 2 persons as any other player before him.

*Example: As the start player, Anna takes a tax collector and a scholar. Next, Benno takes a tax collector and a farmer. When he finishes, Clara takes a scholar and a farmer. Therefore, the remaining players may not take a combination of tax collector/scholar, tax collector/farmer or farmer/scholar…*

*Now, and throughout the game*, every player must place each person tile he takes below any 1 of his palaces. A palace with 1 story may only contain 1 person tile; a palace with 2 stories may hold up to 2 person tiles; and a palace with 3 stories may hold up to 3 person tiles. A palace may never have more than 3 stories.

*Every time* that a player takes a new person tile and places it below 1 of his palaces, he must also immediately move his *person marker* forward on the person track the *full number of spaces* shown on the newly assigned person tile (values 1 to 6). If his marker lands on the same space as that of another player, he simply places it *on top* of that player's marker.

*Example: In the above example, Anna moves her person marker to space 7. Benno must then move his marker to the same place, so he places his on top of Anna's. Clara goes next, moving her marker to space 8.*

## PLAYING THE GAME

The game consists of exactly 12 rounds, symbolizing the 12 months in the Year of the Dragon. Each round consists of the following 4 phases, in order:

- 1st Phase: Action
- 2nd Phase: Person
- 3rd Phase: Event
- 4th Phase: Scoring

### ▸ 1st Phase: Action

Shuffle the 7 action cards at the start of this phase. Then place them, still face down, in the large center space on the board in as many *groups* as there are players *(e.g., if there are 2 players, they are divided into 2 groups; if there are 3 players, 3 groups, etc.)*. The cards should be divided as evenly as possible. Afterward, turn the cards face up, making sure they are visible to all.

*Example for a display in a 4-player game*



After the display is complete, the player whose person marker is *farthest* ahead on the person track selects 1 *group*, places his dragon on it, and carries out *exactly 1* of the actions in the chosen group. Next, the player whose marker is *second farthest* on the person track does the same, and so on. *This means that player turn order is not determined by the way the players are seated but rather is governed throughout the game by the players' positions on the person track.*

**Before the game begins, each player takes 2 person tiles and places them in his palaces** (only younger, never 2 of the same, no identical combinations between players)

**A palace may only contain 1 person per floor**

**No palace may have more than 3 floors**

**Players must always move their person markers forward the number of spaces on their new person tiles**

PLAYING THE GAME

**Each round consists of 4 phases, in order:**

- **1st Phase: Action**
- **2nd Phase: Person**
- **3rd Phase: Event**
- **4th Phase: Scoring**

▸ 1st Phase: Action

**Lay out action cards in 2 to 5 groups:**

2 Players:
3 Players:
4 Players:
5 Players:

**The player whose marker is farthest on the person track is first to take *1 action***

In player order, all of the other players take turns choosing a group of cards (a player may select a group that was already chosen by a previous player), placing their dragons on them, and carrying out the action shown on any 1 card in the chosen group (including an action taken by a previous player).

When all players have taken an action in order of the person track, they take back their dragons, and place all of the action cards in a face down pile again in the middle space on the board.

*Note:* If a player chooses a *group* of cards already chosen by at least 1 other player that round (meaning, there is at least 1 dragon on it), he must pay *3 yuan* (by returning the appropriate coins to the general supply), or else he may not take *any* action from that group or place his dragon on it.

*Example: Doro would like to take an action from a group of cards that already has 2 dragons on it. She pays 3 yuan to the supply and performs an action of her choice from that group.*

*Instead* of placing his dragon on 1 of the groups of cards and carrying out an action from it, a player may skip the first phase completely and bring his personal supply of money *up to 3 yuan*. In other words, he does not necessarily take 3 yuan, but only as many coins as necessary to give him a total of 3 yuan!

*Example: Emil does not want to take any action, preferring to stock up on money. He has 1 yuan already, so he takes 2 more from the general supply. This concludes Phase 1 for Emil.*

**The Individual Actions in Detail:**

**Taxes**

When a player chooses this action, he takes 1 yuan from the supply for each of the 2 coins shown on the card as well as 1 additional yuan for each coin shown on any **tax collectors** (yellow) he has in his palaces.

*Note: We do not intend the game to run short of pieces, except for the person tiles. All other tiles (such as money, privileges, palace floors, rice, fireworks, etc.) should be considered unlimited, so temporarily substitute any suitable markers for any that run short.*

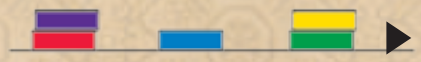
*Example: Clara chooses the action "Taxes." She has no tax collectors in her palaces. Accordingly, she takes 2 yuan from the general supply. Next, Doro, who has 2 tax collectors, chooses the same action, so she pays 3 yuan to the general supply (because Clara already has her dragon on this group), and then takes 8 back from the supply (2 + 3 + 3).*

**Build**

When a player chooses this action, he takes 1 palace floor from the general supply for the hammer shown on the action card as well as 1 additional palace floor for each hammer shown on any **craftsmen** (beige) in his palaces.

The player may build these *new* palace floors as he chooses: he can either add floors to his existing palaces *(bearing in mind that no palace can have more than 3 floors)*, or he can build new palaces from 1 to 3 stories high. A player may own as many palaces as he likes.

*If multiple person markers share a space, players take turns in top-to-bottom order, according to the markers.*



*In this example, players take turns as follows: yellow first, green second, blue third, purple fourth, red fifth*

**All other players carry out 1 action each in order of their person markers on the person track**

**If a player selects a group of cards previously chosen by another player, he must pay 3 yuan**

**Instead of taking an action, a player can replenish his money *up to 3 yuan***

**The Actions**



**Taxes:**
**Take 1 yuan from the supply for each coin symbol** (on the card and the player's tax collectors)



**Build:**
**Take 1 palace floor from the supply for each hammer** (on the card and the player's craftsmen), then build the new floors; no palace higher than 3 floors

*Note: A player may only build the newly acquired floors. Already placed palace floors may not be rearranged.*

*Example: Emil chooses the action "Build." He has 2 craftsmen in his palaces: Emil takes 3 palace floors from the supply. He uses 2 to transform an existing 1-story palace into a 3-story palace, and with the third, he starts a new 1-story palace.*

### Harvest

When a player chooses this action, he takes 1 rice tile from the general supply for the rice sack shown on the action card as well as 1 additional rice tile for each rice sack shown on any **farmers** (green) in his palaces (placing them next to his palaces in plain view).
*The use of these tiles will be explained later, under the section for the "Drought" event.*

*Example: Anna takes the action "Harvest." She has 1 younger farmer (1 rice sack) and 1 older farmer (2 rice sacks) in her palaces. Therefore, she takes a total of 4 rice tiles from the supply (1 + 1 + 2).*

### Fireworks Display

When a player chooses this action, he takes 1 fireworks tile from the supply for the rocket shown on the card as well as 1 additional fireworks tile for each rocket shown on any **pyrotechnists** (purple) in his palaces (placing them next to his palaces in plain view).
*The use of these tiles will be explained later, under the section for the "Dragon Festival" event.*

### Military Parade

When a player chooses this action, he moves his person marker 1 space forward on the *person track* for the helmet shown on the action card as well as 1 space for each helmet shown on any **warriors** (red) in his palaces.

*Example: Benno takes the action "Military Parade." He has 2 older warriors (2 helmets apiece) in his palaces, so he moves his person marker forward 5 spaces (1 + 2 +2).*

### Research

When a player chooses this action, he moves his scoring marker 1 space forward on the scoring track for the book shown on the action card as well as 1 space for each additional book shown on the **scholars** (white) in his palaces.

*Example: Doro takes the action "Research." She has 1 younger scholar (2 books) and 1 older scholar (3 books) in her palaces, so she moves her scoring marker forward 6 points (1 + 2 + 3).*

### Privilege

When a player chooses this action, he pays either **2 yuan** to obtain a small privilege or **6 yuan** for a large privilege (paying the money to the general supply). He places this privilege tile next to his palaces.
A player may only purchase *1 privilege* per action, even if he has the money for more. A player may accumulate as many privileges as he likes. At the end of *each round*, players score 1 victory point for each dragon shown on their privilege tiles.
*Note: Dragons are synonymous with victory points. Therefore, dragons appear on privileges, scholars' texts and the fans of the court ladies.*



**Harvest:**
**Take 1 rice tile from the supply for each rice sack** (on the card and the player's farmers)



**Fireworks Display:**
**Take 1 fireworks tile from the supply for each rocket** (on the card and the player's pyrotechnists)



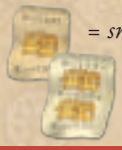
**Military Parade:**
**Move 1 space on the person track for each helmet** (on the card and the player's warriors)



**Research:**
**Move 1 space on the scoring track for each book** (on the card and the player's scholars)



**Privilege:**
**Pay 2, or 6, yuan to the supply and take a small, or large, privilege tile from the supply accordingly**



*= small (2 yuan)*

*= large (6 yuan)*

## ▶ 2nd Phase: Person

After everyone has taken an action or replenished his supply of yuan to 3, each player, in the order shown on the person track *(which may have changed through the action "Military Parade")*, plays *1 person card* from his hand onto the common discard pile on the board. The player then takes the matching person tile from the board and places it below any 1 of his palaces. If all of his palaces are full, he may replace 1 of his existing person tiles. The displaced courtier is then "released from royal service". All persons released in this manner are removed from the game *(which means they are not placed in their pile on the board again!)*.
Afterward, the player moves his person marker forward on the person track the number of spaces equal to the value on the new person tile.

*Note:*
*Person markers are never moved backward when a person gets released (due to replacement or an event).*
*Acquiring new persons does not entitle a player to immediately take new rice tiles, fireworks tiles, money, victory points, etc. Rather, the person tiles generate resources only through corresponding actions chosen by the player in later action phases.*
*When a player plays a card with a question mark, he may choose any person tile from the display.*
*As long as a player has room in his palaces, he must summon new persons to his court. If all of his palaces are full, and he does not want to replace any of his existing courtiers, he can instead release the new person forthwith by removing the tile from the game when he acquires it.*
*However, in this case, he does not move his marker on the person track.*
*When a player plays a card showing a courtier whose tile is no longer available on the board, he gets nothing (he does not get a "substitute" person).*
*In the 12th round, players skip the second phase because they will not have any person cards in their hands at that point.*

## ▶ 3rd Phase: Event

After each player plays a person card, a monthly event takes place. In the first 2 rounds, the event is always "Peace". In subsequent rounds, each month's event is dictated by the next event tile in the event row, going from left to right in order. After that round's event, turn the corresponding event tile face down.

**The Individual Events:**

**Peace:**
*Nothing* happens.

**Imperial Tribute:**
Each player must pay **4 yuan in tribute** to the emperor (placing the coins into the general supply). If a player does not have enough money, he must release 1 person of his choosing from any 1 of his palaces for each missing yuan.

*Note: Players may not voluntarily release a person from their court in an effort to hold onto their money. Moreover, the coins pictured on the players' tax collectors do not count for anything when paying tribute.*

*Example: Clara only has 2 yuan. She must pay these in tribute, and for the missing 2 yuan, she must release 2 persons from her palaces.*

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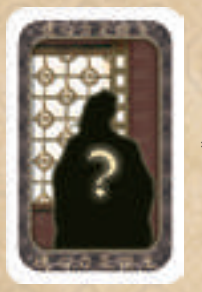
▶ 2nd Phase: Person
**In the order shown on the person track, each player:**

- **plays *1 person card* from his hand,**
- **takes the matching person tile,**
- **places it in 1 of his palaces,**
- **moves his person marker forward**

**If all of a player's palaces are full, he can replace an existing person tile in a palace of his choosing**



*= any person tile*

▶ 3rd Phase: Event
**There are 6 different event types: peace, imperial tribute, drought, Mongol invasion, dragon festival and contagion**

**Peace:**
**Nothing happens**



**Imperial Tribute:**
**Each player pays 4 yuan**
For each yuan a player is short, release 1 person



**Drought:**
Each player must **return 1 rice tile** to the supply for *each* palace in which he has at least 1 person. If a player does not have enough rice tiles, he must release 1 person from each palace that he cannot supply (in which case the affected player chooses which palace(s) will go unsupplied).

*Note: Players may not voluntarily release a person in an effort to hold onto rice tiles. Moreover, the rice pictured on the farmers does not count for anything during a drought.*

*Example: Anna has 3 inhabited palaces and 1 empty palace along with 4 rice tiles. Anna returns 3 rice tiles to the supply and thereby withstands the drought. Benno also has 3 inhabited palaces, but he has no rice tiles. Benno must release 1 person from each of his 3 palaces.*

**Dragon Festival:**
The player or players with the most fireworks tiles get **6 victory points**, and the players with the second most get **3 victory points**. Afterward, the scoring players must return half of their fireworks tiles to the supply (rounding up where necessary).

*Note: If multiple players tie for first, they all get the full 6 points, and the players in second place still get their points. Players who have no fireworks tiles cannot score any points. The rockets pictured on the pyrotechnists do not count for anything during dragon festival scoring.*

*Example: Clara and Emil each have 3 fireworks tiles. Anna has 2, and Benno 1. Clara and Emil each get 6 points (and turn in 2 fireworks tiles), whereas Anna gets 3 points (and turns in 1 tile). Benno gets nothing (and turns in nothing).*

**Mongol Invasion:**
Each player moves his scoring marker forward on the scoring track as many spaces as the **total number of helmets on all warriors** in his palaces. Additionally, the **player or players with the fewest helmets** must each release *1 person* from any 1 of their palaces. *(This can even be a warrior who was just counted.)*

*Note: If all players have an equal number of helmets (including, for example, none), then each must release 1 person from service.*

*Example: Anna and Benno each have warriors in their palaces showing a total of 3 helmets, whereas Clara has 2, and Doro and Emil have 1 helmet each. Anna and Benno move 3 spaces forward on the scoring track, Clara moves 2, and Doro and Emil move 1. Afterward, Doro and Emil must each release 1 person from among their palaces.*

**Contagion:**
Each player must **release 3 persons of their choosing** from their palaces. A player can protect his province from the spread of disease through the services of his **healers** (blue) in that, for each mortar pictured on a player's healers, he releases 1 fewer person.

*Example: Clara has 2 younger healers (each with 1 mortar) in her palaces. Consequently, she loses 1 person instead of 3. (This may include a healer who just protected her.)*

*General Rule: If multiple players are required to release courtiers from service at once, the dismissals occur in the player order shown on the person track.*

**Drought:**
**Each player must turn in 1 rice tile for each inhabited palace**



Release 1 person from each unsupplied palace

**Dragon Festival:**
**Players get 6, or 3, victory points for the most, or the second most, fireworks tiles**



Scoring players then turn in half of their tiles to the supply

**Mongol Invasion:**
**Each player scores points equal to their helmets**



The player(s) with the fewest must each release a *single* person

**Contagion:**
**Each player must release 3 persons**



1 fewer per mortar

**Decay**

*After* an event occurs, each player must check to see if he has any uninhabited palaces. If so, each such palace must be reduced by 1 floor (returning lost palace floors to the supply). Note that this can lead to the complete disappearance of an unpopulated, one-story palace.

*Note: Because of this rule, there is no point in a player choosing the "Build" action to create a one-story palace without assigning a person to it in the very next person phase!*

## ▶ 4th Phase: Scoring

After the current event is finished, and any palaces have fallen into decay, each player moves his scoring marker forward on the scoring track, earning 1 point apiece for:

- each of his **palaces** (regardless of whether they are inhabited or how many floors they have),
- each dragon on the fans of his **court ladies**, and
- each dragon on his **privileges**.

*Example: Anna has 3 palaces containing, among other courtiers, 2 court ladies, and 1 large privilege: she moves her scoring marker forward 7 spaces (3 + 2 + 2).*

The round is finished, and a new one can begin …

## GAME END

The game ends after scoring is complete at the end of the 12th round. Then, each player earns additional victory points in a **final scoring** as follows:

- for each **person**: each person tile in a player's palaces is worth 2 victory points;
- for each **monk** (brown): to calculate the points produced by each monk, multiply the number of Buddhas on the monk by the number of floors in the palace the monk inhabits;
- for the player's **remaining money**: first, each player sells back to the supply all of his rice and fireworks tiles for 2 yuan each. Afterward, each player earns 1 victory point for every 3 yuan he possesses.

*Example: At the end of the game, Benno has 7 courtiers in his palaces (including 1 younger monk in a 2-story palace and 1 older monk in a 3-story palace), 1 rice tile, 2 fireworks tiles and 4 yuan. Benno scores a total of 25 additional victory points:*

- *14 points for the 7 persons;*
- *8 points for the 2 monks: 2 (1 x 2) + 6 (2 x 3) = 8;*
- *3 points for his 10 yuan (10 divided by 3) (with 10 yuan representing the 4 he already had plus the 6 he gained from the sale of his 1 rice and 2 fireworks tiles).*

**The winner** and most successful ruler is the player whose marker is farthest on the scoring track at game's end. In the case of a tie, the winner is the player (among those who are tied) whose marker is farthest ahead on the person track.

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**Decay:**
**After each event, all uninhabited palaces lose 1 floor**

▶ 4th Phase: Scoring

**Each player scores victory points for:**

· **palaces** (1 point each)

· **court ladies** (1 point each)

· **privileges** (1 point per dragon)

GAME END

**The game ends after the scoring phase of the 12th round**

**Each player gets additional victory points for**

· **person tiles** (2 points each)

· **monks** (Buddhas x floors)

· **coins** (3 yuan = 1 point)

**The player with the most victory points wins**

If you have any comments, suggestions, or questions, please email us at

**RioGames@aol.com**

or write us at

**Rio Grande Games,**
**PO Box 45715,**
**Rio Rancho, NM 87174, USA.**

Also, please visit our web site at

**www.riograndegames.com**.

English translation by Christine Biancheria.

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