

Pastures New

A pencil and paper game for 2 players

Overview

Players draw a grid on a piece of paper, representing an area of land. They take it in turns to fill a square with a terrain type, and once the grid is filled, they score points by controlling areas by placing castles onto the grid, the player with the most points wins.

Setup

Draw a grid on a piece of paper, any size will do, but 8x8 is suggested as a decent size to play on. The larger the grid, the longer the game will take to play.

Filling the grid

Each player takes it in turn to fill a square. They fill each square with one of the following types of terrain:

- M – Mountain
- P – Plains
- F – Forest
- R – River
- D – Desert
- W - Wasteland

Squares must be filled according to the following rules:

- A player may not play the same type of terrain twice in a row.
- A player may not play the same type of terrain as was played by their opponent
- Deserts may not be played adjacent to Rivers, and vice versa
- Plains may not be played adjacent to Mountains, and vice versa

Claiming Territory

Once the grid is filled, players take turns to claim territory. In turn, each player can place a Castle (C) on the grid in any space filled with Wasteland or Plains. Castles have an area of influence of one square in each direction around them. You may not place a Castle so that its area of influence overlaps another Castle's area. Players take turns to play Castles until no further Castles can be played.

Players score points as follows:

- 3 Points per Plains square within the area of influence of one of their Castles
- 2 Points per Woods square
- 1 Point per River or Mountain square

The player with the highest score wins.

Tips for a better game

- Since points are scored depending on which squares your castles control, it is important to distinguish the different Castles, either with different colours, or symbols.
- It is a good idea to encourage quick play, as there is no randomness to the game, it is solvable, so players can take a long time over moves seeking the optimal choice.

Example

M	M	F	D	D
M	C	P	P	P
F	P	P	R	P
F	R	R	R	W
R	R	W	W	W

This is an example of small section of the board. Player 1 has played a Castle (marked by the blue C). The area of influence of the Castle is shown by the blue square.

Player 2 can now play their own castle. They must play in one of the squares shown in the Red section, as all other squares are invalid because playing there would cause the areas of influence to overlap. They are still limited by the Castle placement rules, so cannot place on the River or Desert squares.

The blue Castle scores Player 1 a total of 14 points, three for each Plains, one for each Mountain and Forest.