

# Kings & Things\*



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### CREDITS - West End Games

*Design:* Tom Wham and Rob Kuntz with Doug Kaufman  
*Development:* Doug Kaufman  
*Contributing Development:* Shelli Ireland and Steve Gilbert

*Editing:* Bill Slavicek  
*Interior Illustrations:* Kevin Wilkins, Richard Johnson  
*Graphics:* Loring Eutemey  
*Cover Illustration:* Ray-Mel Cornelius

*Playtesting and Advice:* Perry Andrus, Gladys Bierce, Ron Bierce, Brian Blume, Jim Burger, Tom Champeny, Neil Christiansen, Dave Conant, Greg Costikyan, Tim Everett, Mike Grey, Ernie Gygax, Elizabeth Hall, Guy Hall, Bruce Heard, Jeff Leason, Russ Lockwood, Paul Miller, Kim Mohan, Paul Murphy, Mike Rothschild, Robert Tufce, Mike Vogel, James Ward, Max Weissman and Ralph Williams.



### CREDITS - Games Workshop

*Production:* Alan Merrett  
*Graphic Design:* Charles Elliott  
*Final Editing:* Marc Gascoigne

*Produced by the Games Workshop Design Studio:* Bryan Ansell, *Managing Director:* Richard Ellard, *Production Manager:* Alan Merrett, *Publications Manager:* Jervis Johnson, *Development Manager:* John Blanche, *Studio Manager:* Charles Elliott, *Graphic Design:* Paul Cockburn, *Commissioning Editor:* Marc Gascoigne, *Editor:* Jim Bambra, Graeme Davis, Rick Priestley, *Authors:* Tony Ackland, Dave Andrews, Colin Dixon, *Artists:* Julie Weaving, Gail Morgan, *Typesetting:* Mark Craven, *Visualising:* Oliver Campbell, Ruth Capon, Susan McLoughlin, David Oliver, Joanna Podowski, Ian Varley, *Finished Art:* Jayu Bacon, *Japanet.*



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the strange and silly world of **Kings & Things\*** (for the full title please refer to the cover!). It is a world of varied terrains and magical items, of mythical beasts and valiant heroes, of Grand Dukes and Master Thieves.

In **Kings & Things\*** you play the role of a minor noble, vying for control of the broken kingdom of Kadab. Opposing you are three other equally minor nobles, all hoping to emerge as the new emperor. To accomplish your divine task you must expand your control of the varied lands of Kadab, increase your income, muster rag-tag armies of whatever creatures are willing to join your cause, recruit powerful heroes to lead them, and build towers, keeps, castles, and finally a citadel to establish your base of power. Sounds easy, doesn't it?

But watch out! Those other players are under the impression that it is *their* divine right. And they have the same chance to recruit armies and even - gasp! - steal away some of your loyal troops, the fiends! If they build a citadel the same turn you do, then you can only win by conquest. That means you have to get your troops marching and capture a second citadel from someone else! Any questions? Good! Read on and all will be explained.

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## EQUIPMENT

**Kings & Things\*** includes:

- ★ 48 hex tiles
- ★ 351 playing pieces
- ★ 8 player racks
- ★ 4 dice
- ★ 1 16-page rule book (including 4-page pull-out)
- ★ 1 game box

### (1.1) The Hex Tiles

**Historical Note:** *Once the lands of Kadab were blessed with really nice weather. We mean really nice. It was so nice that people (and Things) came from all over the world to settle down and soak up the sun. Then an accident destroyed Yazilik University, the empire's centre of magical learning and power. Well, when the old school went boom in the year 250 it released several conflicting fertility spells which changed the climate and complexion of the land. Frozen wastelands are now in close proximity to steaming swamps and vast deserts are adjacent to verdant plains.*

**Kings & Things\*** does not use a regular board. Instead, you build your own board, changing the terrain layout each time you play. (Those fertility spells are fickle and still quite potent.)

The hex tiles represent the seven different types of land (jungle, frozen waste, forest, plains, swamp, mountain, desert) and sea you will encounter and battle over on your way to imperial glory.



JUNGLE



FROZEN WASTE



FOREST



PLAINS



SWAMP



MOUNTAIN



DESERT



SEA

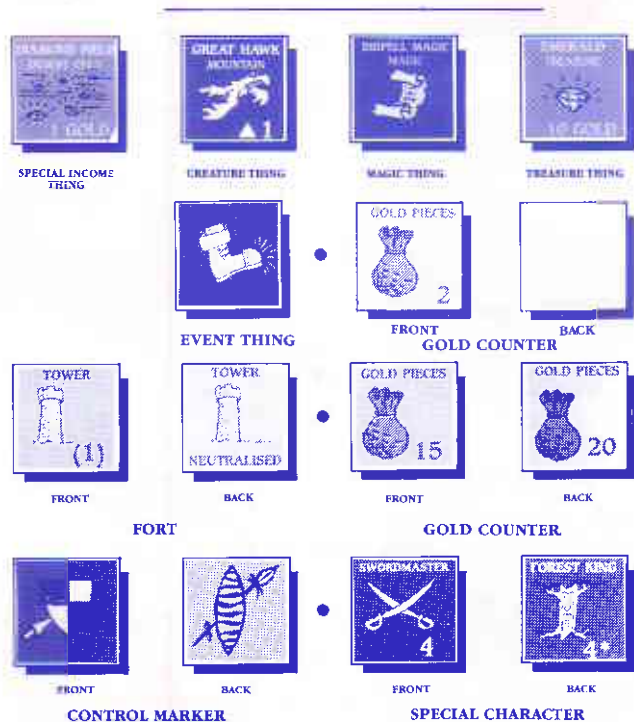
### (1.2) The Playing Pieces

**Historical Note:** *The creatures of Kadab (and even many inanimate objects) have been blessed with at least a rudimentary intelligence since the Big Boom at Yazilik U. As the magic that was released from those hallowed halls settled over the land, it became evident that life wasn't going to be quite the way it was. Things were awarded full rights as citizens by Emporer Nablopal III's Code of Laws and Things (back in the Year 248, before the empire collapsed). So goblins, dinosaurs, flying squirrels, elves, buffalo and even killer penguins all have a say in the politics of the land (even though some still have a little trouble understanding - much less appreciating - the honor).*

One of the ways you gain power is by mustering rag-tag armies of whatever creatures are willing to join your cause (usually in exchange for gold, food and a good time).

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The 234 counters with the blank backs are called *Things*. They represent the fantastic creatures, special income counters, magic items, treasures, gold and random events in the world of **Kings and Things**<sup>\*</sup>. The remaining counters - all with variously marked backs - are forts (in four sizes), control markers (used to denote ownership of land hex tiles and Thing stacks), and special characters (the powerful heroes of the world).



Kadab (by conquering it yourself, of course), there are a couple of things you should know and do. **Kings & Things**<sup>\*</sup> works best with four players, but if you can't find that many minor nobles, even two or three players will find the game fun and exciting.

There are a number of tasks that need to be done to set up the game. They are:

**(2.11) The Bank:** This is where all those important game pieces are kept so they are easily accessible throughout the game. Sort the forts, gold pieces and control markers by type. Set them off to one side of the playing area.

**(2.12) The Playing Cup:** This is what you will randomly draw Things from. Place all of the Thing counters in a large cup, bowl, or even the box top (see, every component has an important function). Mix well. Oh, don't forget to punch them out first.

**(2.13) Special Characters:** Randomly determine which side of the back-printed special character counters will be used in the game. Some acceptable methods to do this are: (1) toss them from a cup or your hand and see which side they fall on, or (2) roll a die for each counter: 1 - 3 = front, 4 - 6 = back. Set them near the bank.

**(2.14) Hex Tile Set-up:** Now it's time to see exactly what the Big Boom is doing to the Kadab terrain this week. Set aside four of the eight sea *hexes* (short for hex tiles). Then shuffle all the land and four remaining sea hexes together face down into a large deck. Now lay out the board according to the diagram in the illustration below. Don't turn the hexes face-up yet.

### SAMPLE CREATURE COUNTER



### FUNNY SYMBOLS USED ON COUNTERS

- ▲ = FLYING CREATURE
- ★ = MAGIC-USING CREATURE
- C = CAN CHARGE IN COMBAT
- R = USES RANGED COMBAT
- \* = HAS SPECIAL ABILITY
- (2) = PARENTHESISED COMBAT VALUE; CAN TAKE MORE THAN ONE HIT IN COMBAT

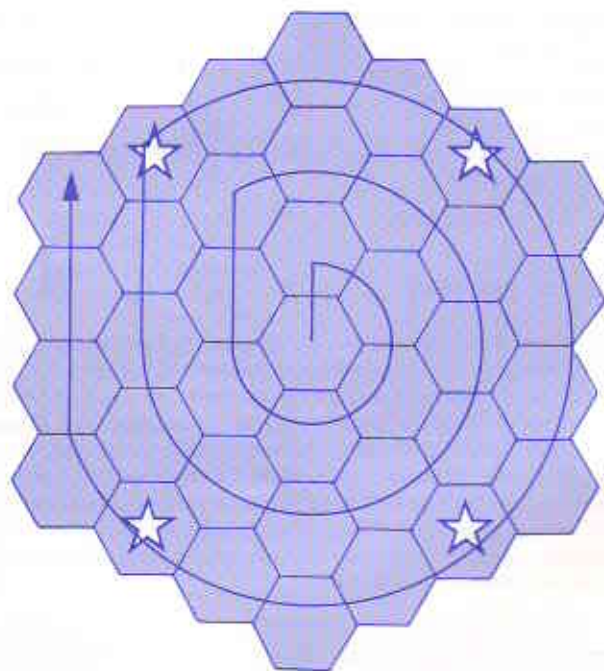
### (1.3) The Player Racks

The racks are used to hold Things not currently in use and to keep them secret from the other players. Treasures, events, magic items, special income counters and creatures can all be kept on your nifty thingamajigs. Special characters, gold counters, and forts may *never* be placed on them.

## 2 SETTING UP THE GAME

### (2.1) The Standard Four Player Game

Before you can set out to reunite the shattered kingdom of



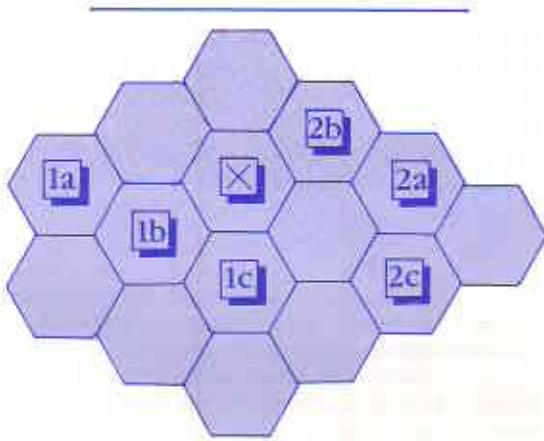
The arrow shows the order in which hexes are laid out.


The four stars indicate the four possible starting points.

**(2.15) Starting Positions:** There are four possible places to start your kingdom, as shown in the previous illustration. Each player rolls two dice. The high roller chooses a starting position first (he's now the *first player*), followed by the other players in clockwise order (you may have to shift seats when you're through, so don't get comfortable). The final arrangement of seats, clockwise from the first player, is known as the *player order*. Now you can turn those hexes face-up.

**Note:** If your starting position is a sea hex or is adjacent to two or more sea hexes, you may remove the sea hex(es) and replace it with a hex drawn from the deck. Repeat this process until your starting position is land with at least two land hexes adjacent to it.

**(2.16) Starting Kingdoms:** Each player receives a set of control markers from the bank and places one marker in his starting hex to show that he owns it. Then, in player order, each player selects and marks a second hex. Repeat this procedure one more time so that each player has a kingdom consisting of three hexes. A player's second and third hex *must* be adjacent to at least one of his previous hexes, and may not be adjacent to the hex of another player.



- 1a = Player 1's starting position
- 2a = Player 2's starting position
- 1b = Player 1's next pick
- 2b = Player 2's next pick
- 1c = Player 1's last pick (he may not pick  as his last hex; it is adjacent to 2's Kingdom)
- 2c = Player 2's last pick

**(2.17) Starting Forces:** Next, each player takes 10 gold pieces (see Section 5) and one tower from the bank, and a rack. In player order, each player takes his tower and puts it in one of his hexes.

Then, again in player order, each player draws 10 Things from the cup (at random - no peeking!). In player order, each minor noble may place some or all of his Things on the board:

★ *Special income counters* include cities, villages, and other counters keyed to specific terrain and printed with gold values. You can place one (and only one) special income counter in each hex you own. Villages and cities can be placed in any of your hexes. Other special income counters can only be placed in hexes of their terrain type.



SPECIAL INCOME COUNTER

**Example:** The Elephants' Graveyard counter says 'Jungle'. If you have a jungle hex, you may place the graveyard there; if you don't you can't place the graveyard on the board.

★ *Creature counters* include killer racoons, ice worms, and other various critters that populate Kadab. You can place your creature counters in any hexes you own, up to 10 per hex. Place them face down and make neat little stacks in whatever hexes you put them.



CREATURE COUNTER

★ *Magic items and treasures* (along with any other unplayed Things) are placed in your rack.



MAGIC ITEM



TREASURE

**(2.18) Exchanging Things:** Next, in player order, players who still have Things on their racks can turn them in for new ones. A player gets to draw one new counter for each counter he returns to the cup. Decide what Things you will return; then draw replacements; then put the returned counters into the cup. If you don't like your replacement counters, tough - you can't replace them again.

Again in player order, anyone who drew replacement counters can place them on the board, according to the rules in 2.17. The rest are placed on the racks.

**(2.19) Preparing the Deck:** Shuffle all the unused terrain hexes together with the four sea hexes set aside earlier. Keep this deck face down and set it near the bank.

## (2.2) Two or Three Players

In a two or three player game, the board is smaller; see Section 16.

## 3 THE SEQUENCE OF PLAY

**Kings & Things\*** is played in *turns*; each turn is divided into *phases*.

### (3.1) The First Player

During set-up, a player order was determined (see Section 2.15). During each phase, the players perform actions in order.

**Example:** In the Gold Collection Phase, the first player takes gold, then the player to his left does, etc. Once all players have taken gold, the next phase begins.

At the beginning of the *next* turn, the player order shifts. The old second player - the one to the first player's left - becomes the new first player and performs actions first in each phase. At the beginning of each subsequent turn, the player order shifts like this again. (We suggest that you have an official 'changing of the order' at the end of each turn.)

**Note:** In a two-player game the player order does not change.

### (3.2) The Turn Sequence Outline

An abbreviated sequence of play is printed on the back of the central pull-out section of these rules. What follows here is a brief explanation including rule section references.

**(3.21) Gold Collection Phase:** Determine income and collect gold pieces from the bank (see **Section 5**). Gold collection is mandatory.

**(3.22) Recruiting Characters:** Each player may attempt to recruit one special character (see **Section 6**). Special character recruitment is optional.

**(3.23) Recruiting Things:** Each player draws Things from the cup. Players may trade in unwanted Things from their racks. Place Things on the board (see **Section 7**). Thing recruitment is mandatory.

**(3.24) Random Events Phase:** Each player may play one Random Event counter from his rack (see **Section 14**). Random event play is optional.

**(3.25) Movement Phase:** Each player may move his counters on the board (see **Section 9**). Movement is optional.

**(3.26) Combat Phase:** Each player may explore or fight battles (see **Sections 10 and 11**). Combat is optional. Sort of.

**(3.27) Construction Phase:** Each player may build forts (**Section 12**). Construction is optional.

**(3.28) Special Powers Phase:** During this phase the Master Thief and the Assassin Primus may use their special powers, if they are in the game (see **Special Characters: Powers and Abilities** in the pull-out). Use of special powers is optional.

**(3.29) Changing Player Order:** The second player becomes the first player (see 3.1). Changing player order is mandatory.

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## WINNING THE GAME

The object of **Kings & Things\*** is to reunite the kingdom of Kadab under your wise and benevolent rule. Whoever can prove his ability to rule will certainly gain the undying gratitude of the killer penguins and ravaging pixies everywhere and be crowned the new Emperor of Kadab. The proof lies in the ability to build and/or capture the very impressive fortified structures known as citadels.

### (4.1) How to Build a Citadel

There are four fort levels. In size order, they are: tower, keep, castle and citadel. Starting with a tower, you will eventually increase the fort in size until you have constructed a citadel (see **Section 12**).

You can only build a citadel during your part of a Construction Phase. You need to already own a castle, have an *income* of 20 (or 15 in a two- or three-player game), and pay 5 gold. See **Section 5**.

## BUILDING A CITADEL



Income must be 20 gold (or 15 in 2 or 3 player game)

**(4.11)** You may not build a citadel if you already own one (whether you conquered or built it).

**(4.12)** You don't actually receive income during the Construction Phase, you simply count up your income to see if you're eligible to build a citadel.

**(4.13)** Once built, a citadel can only be lost by conquest. You do not lose it if your income dips below 20 (or 15 in a two- or three-player game).

### (4.2) Winning with a Citadel

*Citadels are big. Citadels are impressive. Citadels are what allow a minor noble to rise above his fellows to become Emperor.*

If you are the first player to build a citadel and no one else builds one by the end of the next Construction Phase, you win - hooray! If someone else builds a citadel before then, the game can only be won by conquest - curses! (see below).

**(4.21)** Once two or more citadels are on the board, players can only win by conquest. This means you need two citadels to win - double curses! A player wins immediately upon capturing a second citadel. (Since you can only build a citadel if you don't already own one, your second citadel must be captured from another player).

**(4.22)** If there is only one citadel on the board and you capture it from its present owner, you must hold it until the end of the Construction Phase of the *next* turn in order to win, just as though you had built it.

**(4.23)** If you build a citadel and then lose it to another player, you may build another citadel (since you can build one if you don't currently own one) as long as you meet the income requirements as usual.

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## GOLD AND INCOME

*Gold pieces are nifty things to have. They can be spent to gain special characters, recruit Things, build forts, and bribe defenders during exploration. You get these wonderful, shiny trinkets during each Income Phase. You can also gain gold pieces by playing treasures drawn from the cup or captured during exploration.*

### (5.1) Income

Each turn during the Gold Collection Phase, you receive as many gold pieces as your *income*. Income is the net worth of your kingdom, determined by certain things you control (see below). Treasures turned in for gold do *not* count as income.

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