

# NYMBAT

a game by Channing Jones (cjones@cjgames.com)

Version 1.2

## **Board**

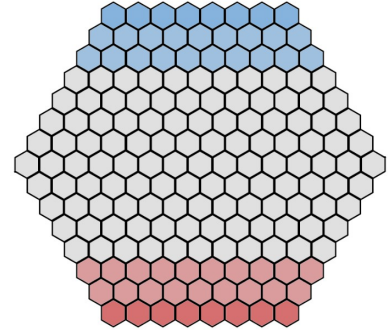
Play on a six-sided hexagonal map with 8 hexes per edge (15 hexes width). See picture to the right.

Home Row:

Each player has a home row of 8 hexes directly next to an edge that is opposite to the opponent's home row.

Setup Area:

A player's home row and the next two rows to it are his setup area (three rows, 27 hexes).



## **Pieces**

There is no fixed set of pieces. Instead, each player creates his pieces from a set of possibilities. Each piece in the game has a color to determine to which player it belongs and a whole number from one to six. Other numbers are not allowed. You can use dice, for example. Pieces are placed inside a hex, with only one piece per hex allowed (except during movement).

## **Reserve Number**

Each player notes a reserve number of 60 on a piece of paper or using pieces next to the board.

## **Play**

Both players must agree beforehand who will take the first turn. Players alternate taking turns. On each player's first turn he must bring in reserves with a limit of 30 (see below).

On subsequent turns a player chooses one of the following three options:

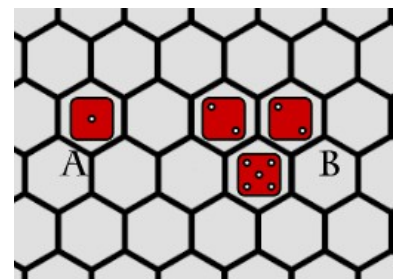
- Bring in Reserves
- Move a Group
- Pass

Bring in Reserves:

The player places any number of his pieces on unoccupied hexes in his setup area, but at least one. He may choose the number for each piece (1-6). On his first turn the total of the numbers on the pieces he places may not exceed 30. After his first turn he may place any total if it does not exceed his current reserve number. At the end of his turn he subtracts the total of numbers he placed from his reserve number.

Move a Group:

The player may move any or all of his pieces in one contiguous group (a solitary piece is also considered a group). Each piece may move any number of hexes up to the lowest number in the group. A piece does not have to move in a straight line. He must end the movement of a piece before he can move another. Both the selection of pieces and the distance they can move are determined by the group as it was at the start of the turn. Moving a piece during a turn does not change this. A player's own pieces do not block movement, but they may not end movement together in the same hex. If a



Red player can either move group A one hex or group B two hexes.

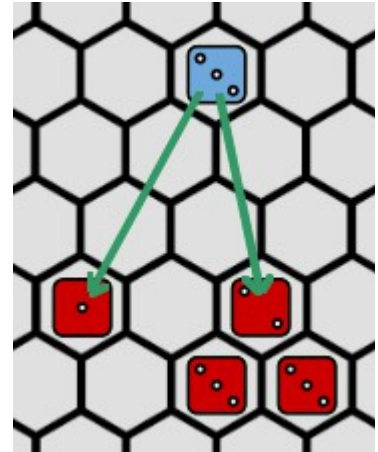
player moves a piece into a hex containing an opponent's piece then he must end its movement there and do removal and breakthrough (see below) before moving the next piece.

Pass:

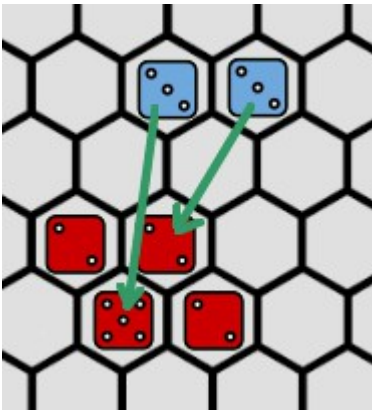
A player must pass if he has no piece on the board and cannot bring in any new piece. He may also choose to pass.

Removal:

When a piece ends its move in a hex with an opponent's piece then the opponent's piece is removed from the board. The moving player's piece is also removed if the number on his piece is equal to or lower than the number of the opponent's piece plus the total of opponent pieces' numbers in adjacent hexes. If it is higher then the moving player's piece is not removed. See picture to the right.



**Removal:** Blue player moves and can either remove the red 1 and keep his piece or remove the red 2 and also lose his piece. The two red 3s are supporting the red 2 for a total of 8.



**Breakthrough:** Blue player moves, first removes a red 2 and then the red 5, resulting in breakthrough and so blue can remove one other red 2 piece of his choice. He cannot remove both remaining red 2s because their total is 4 which is greater than 3. Blue loses both his pieces.

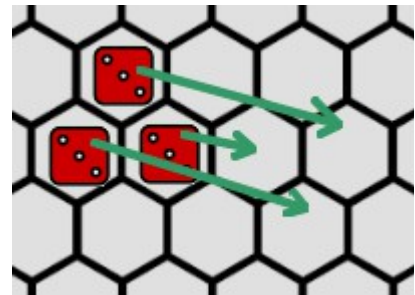
**Breakthrough:**

If the removal of an opponent's piece causes a contiguous group of his pieces to be split into two or more groups then the moving player may remove any or all opponent's pieces adjacent to that piece with the following limit. The total of numbers of the adjacent pieces removed may not be greater than the number of the last piece the moving player moved. The removal of additional pieces in this way does not cause a "breakthrough" again (i.e. no chain reactions). See picture to the left.

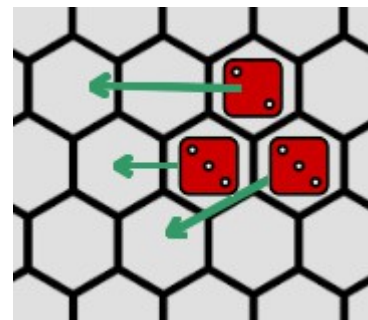
**Retreat/Delay Penalty:**

A player must reduce his reserve number by one if he retreats on one turn or every seven turns he delays (even if non-consecutive).

If his reserve number is zero, then he must instead remove one of his pieces from the board. A turn is considered to be a retreat if a player moves a group effectively further away\* from the opponent's home row. A turn is a delay if none of his groups moved effectively closer\* to the opponent's home row and he did not bring in any new pieces. A pass is also a delay. If a player removes an opponent's piece on his turn then it is neither a delay nor a retreat in any case. A turn that already is a retreat is also not considered to be a delay in any case.



**Retreat:** Red is retreating since he moved back one row.



**Delay:** Red is delaying. Although one piece has moved backwards, his most forward piece has stayed on the same row, so it still counts as a delay.

\*) To determine the change of distance to the opponent's home row compare the start with the end of the turn only and by counting the number of hexes from the closest piece of the group each time. Pieces are considered as belonging to the group as it was at the start of the turn only (i.e. splitting up or moving adjacent to other groups does not change group membership for this rule).

### Win

A player wins the game if at the start of his turn he has a piece on his opponent's home row and no opponent's piece is there. If all the pieces on the board have been removed and both players have a reserve of zero, then the player who moved last wins.

## Strategy Tips

Here are some elementary hints for better play:

Groups should most often consist of one number. That way you don't waste any movement points.

Pieces in groups defend better. The numbers of the adjacent pieces add to each other to create higher numbers which helps deter an attack.

Large (and some small) groups are vulnerable against "breakthrough". "Breakthroughs" against your own pieces should nearly always be avoided.

A group which consists of three hexes directly adjacent to each other is safe against a "breakthrough". This formation (I call it a "shield") should be chosen when the opponent has higher numbered pieces nearby.

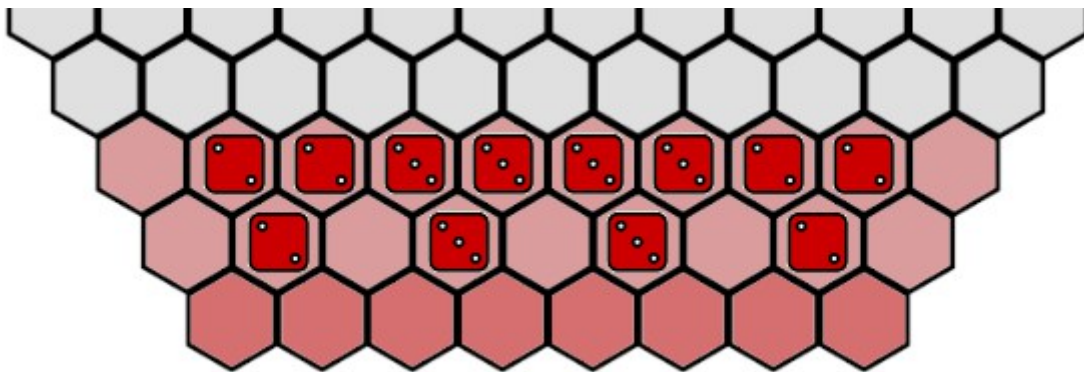
At the start you can put all your pieces in one big group. The opponent is still far away and won't be able to attack you. This has the advantage that you can move everything in the next turn.

If you still have a reserve number of at least two, then you will not lose if your opponent moves onto your empty home row. You can then bring in two 1s and put them on your home row. Your opponent won't be able to remove both of them.

Certain numbers are good against certain other numbers. This means that one type of number will usually be able to remove more points or lose less points in a direct confrontation. Memorize which combinations these are. The 3s are good against 6s and 5s, 6s are good vs. 1s, 1s are good vs. 2s, 2s and 4s are good vs. 3s, 2s are good vs. 4s, 5s are good vs. 2s, etc.

Setup for Beginners:

Beginners can choose this setup for their first move (costs 30 reserve points) which is relatively good:



## Four Player Game

Play in two teams, 2 vs. 2. A team takes two adjacent edges opposite to the other team for their home rows. Note that the setup areas of a team overlap.

Turn Sequence:

Both teams agree beforehand which team moves first. Then the two players of that team agree which of them will take his turn first. If they cannot agree then they both must pass. Then one player of the other team takes his turn as decided in the same manner. Then the other player of this first team who did not take his turn yet takes his turn. Then the last player takes his turn. After all four players have taken their turn then the same sequence starts again beginning with the team who moved first.

Example: There are four players: A, B, C, and D. A & B are playing versus C & D. Players agree that team A & B will move first. Then players A & B decide that player B will move first. Then players C & D agree that player C will move next. Then player A moves, and finally player D moves. Then the team A & B may choose again which one of them moves next.

Reserve Number:

Each player has an initial reserve number of 40 instead. For each player's first turn the limit is 20 instead.

Team Pieces:

The pieces of of two team members do not form groups. They also do not add each others numbers in adjacent hexes for the removal rule. They are also not affected by a breakthrough on each others groups. They do not block movement though, so they may move through each other freely as long they do not end movement together.

Retreat/Delay Penalty:

The retreat or delay penalty for a player is determined using the home row of the opponent that is directly opposite to his home row only. If that player is eliminated then he must use the other opponent's home row instead.

Player Elimination:

A player is eliminated if an opponent fulfills the winning condition of the two-player game against him (i.e. there is an opponent's piece on his home row and he has none of his pieces there). Any pieces of his still on the board are removed and his reserve number is set to zero. A player is also eliminated if he has a reserve of zero and no pieces on the board.

Win:

To win a team must eliminate both players of the opposing team. Note that an eliminated player of a team that wins the game is also considered a winner.

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