

SENET

the game of the pharaohs

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SENET

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Senet is a board game for two players. Each player attempts to beat the other in racing around the board then bearing off his playing pieces first. Each player has five playing pieces, black or white. The playing pieces move around the board as shown numerically in fig.1 (from 1-30).

To begin the game the pieces are placed on squares 1 through 10 with the white pieces occupying the odd-numbered squares, the black pieces on the even-numbered squares.

The movement of the pieces is determined by throws of the four sided dice sticks. The dice sticks score as follows:

- ∨ One flat side up =1
- ∨ Two flat sides up =2
- ∨ Three flat sides up =3
- ∨ Four flat sides up =4
- ∨ Four round sides up =6

(Therefore it is not possible to score a 5.)

In order to ascertain which player has the darker pieces, players alternate throwing the dice sticks until one throws a 1. This player has the darker pieces and moves the piece on square 10 to square 11. After the first move the same player continues to throw. If he or she throws a 1, 4 or 6 the player then moves the piece the indicated number of squares along the board and then throws again. If a 2 or 3 is thrown then the player moves a piece the indicated number of squares and the turn passes to the opponent. To clarify, each player's turn always ends when a 2 or 3 is thrown.

If a piece lands on a square which is occupied by an opponent's piece, the opponent's piece is considered to be "under attack" and is moved back to the square vacated by the piece in play. Two pieces of the same color cannot occupy the same square, but two pieces which occupy consecutive squares, such as 16 and 17, protect each other for being "under attack" by the opponent's pieces.

Three pieces of the same color in a row form a block and cannot be attacked and passed by the opponent's pieces although they do not block the play of pieces of the same color. Any dice stick throw which cannot be used to make a forward movement must be used to move a piece in the reverse direction. If the move backwards lands a piece on a square occupied by an opponent's piece, then the opponent's piece is moved forward to the square just vacated by the piece in play. That is, they exchange places. If no move is possible in either direction, then the game is lost.

Square 27, marked by the symbol of water, is the trap. Any player's piece landing on this square must return to the square 15 - marked by another symbol. If square 15 is occupied, then the piece must return to the start of the game. Marked squares (26, 28 and 29) are "safe", where pieces are protected and are not vulnerable to being "under attack" by the opponent's playing pieces. A player doesn't have to move off of these safe squares unless he chooses to do so.

A player may not begin to move pieces off the board until all his pieces are out of the first row. It is not necessary to land exactly on square 30 before bearing off. You can throw a number higher than required. If any

of the players pieces are attacked or moved back to row 1, then pieces of that player which remain on the board in the third row cannot bear off the board until all the players pieces are once again out of the first row.

The first player to bear off all of his pieces is the winner. The winning player is awarded one point for each opponents piece left on the third row and three points for each piece in row one or two.