



CONTROLLING TSESTERLEG

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4.1 Attributions

1. Components

Board / Map



Rules



6 x Dice



Decks











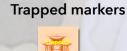
Player Units



Chits



Other



Rebellion markers



Sanitation markers



3 x "State of the nation" Player Mats



Season marker



Coins



2. Overview

Introduction & Notes on Game Design

36 stratagems is a board game which is set within a broad historical timeframe, but it is not intended to be a simulation of the historical period. Rather, the philosophy of the game design is that it is first and foremost designed to be an enjoyable game where the various aspects of historical theme enhance and add to the enjoyment and character of the game. The Ming Dynasty was a fascinating period which lasted nearly 300 years (1368-1644). Many events that can occur in the game did happen during the period. There were rebellions, battles between rival families, attacks by Japanese pirates, outbreaks of plague, the founding of great temple monasteries and the building of large sections of the great wall. It was also a period that saw several great emperors who became the model for orderly government for many years that followed. In the game you step into their shoes but make your own history.

Overview

36 stratagems is a game for 2-3 players, which is set in the Ming Dynasty era in China and neighbouring states. You are the leader of one of several rival families aspiring to become emperor of the entire region. You start the game in a capital city, with just an aspiring emperor, a scout and a small army. The aim of the game is to become the dominant dynasty by conquering and maintaining control of capitals, temples and prefectures. Each of these actions will help you in gaining the victory points needed to be the undisputed emperor and win the game. To be successful you will need to manage your budding empire carefully. Manage your economy through taxation and expanding your population, secure stability by maintaining cohesion among the political elite, maintain a strong military through recruitment of units supported by powerful generals and avoid rebellion by gaining popularity with your subjects. You face an uncertain destiny and will encounter many challenges during your reign including plague, piracy and looting. However, you are not alone in your quest, as to help you gain the power you so richly deserve and to undermine your pitiful and unworthy enemies, you can call upon the ancient Chinese wisdom enshrined in the 36 stratagems.

Advanced & Basic Rules

There are two game variants, the basic rules variant & the advanced rules variant. Players should agree before the start of any game which version they wish to play. The winter phase and winter-specific rules are only applied in the advanced game and are ignored in the basic game. Aside from this, both game versions are identical. When playing the basic rules game, players should ignore any reference to winter, food scarcity and agricultural colonies.

Terminology

Space = Any space on the board where a unit can move or end its turn.

Control = Control of a space on the board by a player or neutral armies.

Event = A stratagem or other card based event in the game which can be played during the action phase.

Action Points = Points equal to a card's value that can be used for various actions including movement & combat Die roll modifier (DRM)= Impacts the number of dice rolled in combat.(e.g +1 Die roll modifier, then roll +1 die).

Battle Combat strength = The combined strength of the units in a battle, including all modifiers.

Hit factor = The number(s) that need to be rolled to cause a hit in battle. (Roll 6s only for hits at start of game).

Hit points = Damage inflicted in combat causing loss of units. (1 hit point damage for each roll equal to or higher than hit factor). E.G. Hit factor of 4+, a roll of 4, 5 or 6 will inflict a hit point of damage.

Unit = A unit on the map being a scout, an army or an emperor.

Deployment points = Points that can be used for creating new units.

Connected route = A continuous route of linked spaces, occupied by a player's units and connected to a capital which that player controls.

3.Rules

3.1 Game Set Up

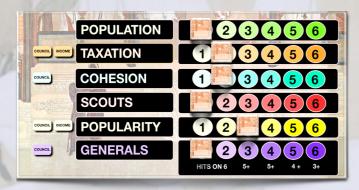
Each player draws a Capital Card to determine their starting space and first capital.

To use standard starting positions select from Karakorum, Lhasa & Hanseong only. For more variety, experienced players may choose to add other capital cards to the deck when drawing starting positions.

Each player receives starting units as described on their capital card and 3 coins.

Units are placed **face down** in each capital. All units in the game are face down unless in combat. Players may review their units at any time without revealing them to the other players. Each player has their own "state of the nation" player mat which shows the status of their rule. Place player markers at start up in the following positions:

You receive 1 population for every capital you control.



Taxation affects income. You may increase / decrease taxation during both council and income phases of the game. However, increases to taxation during income phase reduce popularity and visa versa.

Cohesion represents the political support for your rule from the nobles and political elite. You can only play a card for the event if you have a cohesion level equal or greater than the card value. Cohesion directly impacts your ability to rule, play events and to weald power.

You do **not** pay a coin during attrition phase for **scout** units. When paying cost of units in attrition phase, deduct the number of

scouts from the number of units. Keep track of the number of your scouts in play on the "state of the nation" mat.

Your popularity protects you from rebellion. Rebellion causes you to lose income through lost taxation.

The more **generals** you have the lower number you have to roll to score hits in combat. This is known as your "hit factor".

- The Season marker should be set to 1 (use season marker)
- Neutral Hits marker should be set to "6 only" (use a neutral army as marker)
- Neutral armies should be place on each empty capital with the strength "2" side face up
- All players place coloured markers on 3 on the Victory Point track & 0 on the tribute track.
- Each player places his 5 remaining scout units face up in one pile (scout pile) and his strength 1 & 2
 units face down in another pile (Unit pile).
- Unused coins, temples, sanitation, rebellion and trapped markers are placed at the side of the board where they can be easily accessed.
- Set up the decks

There are several decks of cards in the game. Place each deck of cards face down next to the board;

Action Cards: These cards are played during the action phase of the game, Each player receives one of these cards

Tribute CardsThese are available to players when they have accumulated 7 points on the tribute track.

Prefecture Cards Players receive a prefecture card at the beginning of each season. Control of prefectures earns

players VP.

Stratagem Cards

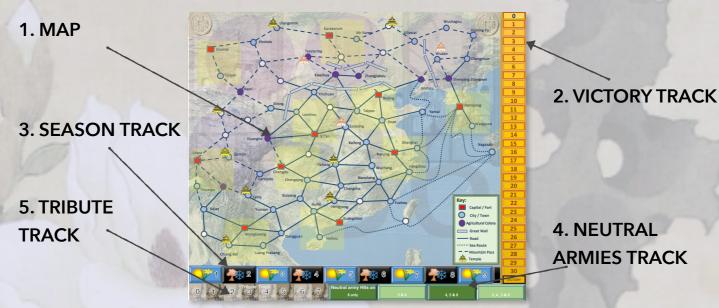
These are the core element of the action phase. Players receives 4 stratagem cards per season.

Capital Cards

Each player begins with one capital. These are selected at random by drawing from the deck.

3.1.1. The Main Board / Map

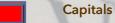
The Main Board comprises 5 distinct areas as highlighted below.



3.1.1.1 The Map

The Map contains spaces, routes and other information.

Spaces on the Map



Capitals are important as they are worth 3 victory points each and are the spaces where units can be deployed.

Control of capitals also gives control of the capital region (yellow square zone)

Capitals are fortified defensive positions. Attacks on Capitals receive a -1 die modifier

City / Town

Cities & towns are named spaces on the maps that are not capital cities.

Cities may become prefectures during the game, when the relevant prefecture card is played.

Agricultural Colony

During winter (Advanced rules only), you must control an agricultural colony within a food scarce region (large purple circle) if you are to winter more than one unit in that zone.

This rule presents opportunities for siege to expel an enemy from a region by a method other than by combat. This rule only applies in winter so is advanced rules variant only.

Market

Control of a market provides an additional 2 coin income during income phase.

Other

Other spaces

3.1.1.1 The Map continued:

Routes on the map

---- Road

Moving a unit or stack of units on a road consumes 1 action point

Sea Route

Moving a unit or stack of units on a sea route consumes 2 action points

Mountain Pass

Moving a unit or stack of units on a mountain pass consumes 2 action points

Other Map features

Great Wall

Attacks on spaces across a section of the great wall incur -2 dice roll modifier.



Temple

Units in temple spaces cannot normally be attacked.

All players units may pass through temple spaces even if occupied by other units. You cannot end movement of units in a temple space if occupied by an opponent. Players controlling 3 temple spaces receive 3 victory points.



Possible Temple site

3 spaces on the map may become temples during the game. Prior to this, they do not act as temple spaces for the purpose of movement, combat or victory points.



Capital Region

These zones surround each capital. If a space within the capital region is attacked and that space contains units of the player who controls the capital, then that player may move units from other spaces in the zone to defend that space. Normal stacking restrictions apply.



Food Scarce Region (Advanced Rules only)

Two areas north of the great wall and one in Tibet to the West are food scarce regions. These mountainous zones rely on agricultural colonies for their food supply in winter. Control of at least one agricultural colony in the same region is required if players are to winter more than one unit in these zones.



A maximum of 3 units are permitted in any single stack or space except for capitals where there is no restriction on the number of units.

Control

To control any space that is not a capital, a player must have a unit in that space. However, capital cities can be controlled by placing a marker in the space when moving all units out of the capital. This does, however, leave the capital space undefended and therefore vulnerable.

3.1.1.2 The Victory Track

The Victory Track shows at a glance, who is currently winning the game. 31 Victory Points are required to win the game. Alternatively, the player with the most VP at end of season 9 wins.

The Victory track contains a coloured marker for each player which represents each players progress towards becoming the undisputed emperor of China and neighbouring states.

Victory points (VP) are awarded and the markers moved on the track when players achieve objectives;

Each Capital controlled

= 3 Victory Points

Each 3 temples controlled

- = 3 Victory Points
- Control of a prefecture when prefecture card is played = 1 Victory point
 - = 1 victory point

Current control of a prefecture

=1 Victory point

Capture of opponents Emperor

= 2 Victory Points

Per scoring above, control of a prefecture when card is played grants 2 victory points. One of these is permanent for when the card is played but one is awarded to the current controller of the prefecture and therefore can change possession during the game.

Some other events and cards may occasionally bestow additional victory points.

Please note: Remember to remove victory points from players when they lose control of capitals or prefectures, or are reduced from 3 temples to fewer.

3.1.1.3 The Season Track



The season track shows the current progress of the game through 9 seasons.



Each season is alternately Spring / Summer or Autumn / Winter. Flip the season marker from the summer side to the winter side depending upon the season.



Please note: The distinction between winter & summer is only relevant in the advanced rules game.

3.1.1.4 The Neutral Armies Track



The neutral armies track shows the strength (or "hit factor") of neutral armies in combat. At start of game, neutral armies only inflict hits on rolls of 6 which is their minimum hit factor. Neutral army strength can be increased or decreased during the game (see 3.1.1.5 The tribute track)

3.1.1.5 The Tribute Track



The tribute track represents the tributes and benefits that an emperor may receive as a result of investing time in both internal and external diplomacy.

The tribute track is a good option when there is no benefit from playing a card for its event or using action points for movement or combat during the action phase.

During the action phase of the game, players may use action points to perform various actions. One option the players have is to expend a cards' action points on the tribute track. These points are added to the result of a roll of one die and the player then moves their marker the total number of moves on the tribute track.

When a player's marker reaches 7 on the track, they receive a tribute card which is played immediately.

When receiving tribute, they may also choose to move the neutral armies' strength (hit factor) up or down by one space on the neutral armies track.

When a player receives tribute they place their tribute marker back to position zero on the track.

3.2 Game Sequence

For easy reference, the game sequence is printed on 2 cards contained within the game.

The game is played over 9 seasons. Each season follows the sequence below:

- 1 Deal Cards
- 2 Action Phase
- 3 Council
- 4 Rebellion
- 5 Income
- 6 Winter (alternate seasons only and advanced rules only)
- 7 Attrition
- 8 Deployment

Details of each of the phases of the game are contained in the Detailed rules section which follows.

3.3 Detailed Rules

3.3.1 Deal Cards & the Action Phase

Before the start of each season, each player receives 4 cards from the Stratagem deck, 1 card from the Action deck and 1 card from the prefecture deck.

Each player rolls die and the highest number roll takes their turn first. (re roll any ties).

Players take it in turn to play cards during the action phase until all players have used all their cards or passed, retaining a maximum of 1 card for use the following season.

Please note: Players may not pass and hold a prefecture card. Prefecture cards must be played in the season they are dealt. Players cannot pass and retain a card at the end of season 9 but must play out all cards.

Playing cards in action phase

Most cards can be played for either the event described on the card, or for the action points value displayed on the card. Some cards, including all prefecture cards and some tribute cards, do not contain the option of action points and can only be played as an event.

Event

You can play the event by following the instructions on the card.

However, you can only play a card for its event if you have a cohesion rating equal to or higher than the cards value.



Action Points

The card's value can be played for action points. 1 action point allows you to move any unit or stack of units between 2 spaces.

Note that movement over a sea route or a mountain pass requires 2 action points. Action points can also be expended on the tribute track. (see section 3.1.1.5)

Action Points options:

The main use of action points are movement & combat. However, they can be used in various ways: Action points can be used for:

- (a) Movement
- (b) Combat
- (c) Tribute track
- (d) Entrapment (if event allows)
- (e) Piracy (if event allows)

Combat:

When you move into a space occupied by another player's units or neutral armies, then combat is initiated. An exception to this rule is that you may pass though occupied temple spaces. You cannot end your movement in temple spaces if occupied by another player and you cannot attack these spaces. The ability to attack temple spaces may be granted by exception by specific events in the game.

When combat is initiated, both stacks are placed face up, revealing the strength of each player's units. Each player adds up the strength of all their revealed units. This is the *base combat strength*. To the *base combat strength* each player adds any die roll modifiers (DRMs) to arrive at their *battle combat strength*.

Die roll modifiers:

Attacks across a section of the Great Wall: -2 DRM
Attacks on a capital: -1 DRM

Flank attack*: +1 DRM for each additional flank

Other (e.g. Bonus from prefecture) +/- DRM per instructions

*A flank attack is an attack from two or more spaces simultaneously, and requires one action point per space used. Non-flank (single space) attacks require only one action point.. You may make as many attacks in one round as you have action points to expend. You may combine movement and combat in one round of action points.

Each player rolls the number of dice equal to their **battle combat strength**. (There is no maximum dice). The minimum roll is 1 die if you have a base combat strength (before DRMs) of at least one. Note that a scout or scouts defending on their own do not have any **battle combat strength**.

Hits are inflicted on enemy units for each roll which is equal to or greater than your current hit factor

Example:

Red player attacks a capital occupied by a neutral army. The battle combat strengths are calculated as follows:





Red player rolls 4 dice

Neutral army rolls 2 dice

Combat Damage & Hit Factor

Each player scores hits based on their *hit factor*. The *hit factor* is determined by the number of generals that a player has. For neutral armies it is determined by the marker on the neutral armies track.

At the start of the game, all players only score hits on rolls of 6 but as they add generals, their *hit factor* improves and they are able to score hits on rolls of 3+, 4+ & 5+ depending upon their number of generals. The number that must be rolled to score a hit is shown on the player mats in the "Generals" section.

For each successful hit rolled, the enemy in battle must absorb the same amount of unit damage.

Example of damage:

Red Player rolls 1 6 = 2 strength Neutral army absorbs 1 hit point damage and is flipped to 1 army

Red player rolls 2 6s = 2 strength Neutral army eliminated

Note: Scouts cannot attack so have zero *battle combat strength* but they can defend. They can absorb 1 hit point of damage before they are eliminated.

Combat continued:

Attacks on capital regions

If you control a capital and an attack is made on a space in that capital region (yellow square zone) then you can move other units of yours from the region to the space being attacked to help defend the space. Normal stacking rules apply so you can only have 3 units maximum in any space other than the capital which has no stack restriction.

The Emperor unit

When the Emperor unit is eliminated in battle, he is considered captured rather than killed. He is available to be deployed during the deployment phase. However, if captured by an opponent they gain 2 Victory points. If defeated by a neutral army then you lose 1 victory point.

3.3.2 Council

During Council phase you may increase Cohesion, Taxation, Popularity or Generals by +1. Make your choice and move marker on your "state of the nation" player mat.

3.3.3 Rebellion

You are allowed one capital with no risk of rebellion. For all other capitals which you control, roll 1 die during this phase. For each roll which is higher than your popularity score, one capital is in a state of rebellion which means you receive no income from that capital during income phase.

To keep track of the impact of rebellion, place rebellion markers on the population section of the "state of the nation" play mat to indicate where a population is in rebellion.

3.3.4 Income

During this phase, you first choose whether to increase or decrease your taxation by one level, then you receive income.

If you increase taxation, then lower your popularity. If you decrease taxation then increase your popularity. You may choose to keep taxation at the same level. You may not increase taxation if your popularity is already at 1.

Receive income as **POPULATION X TAXATION** plus 2 coins

Note that you deduct any rebellions gained in the previous phase, from your population score for the purpose of income.

After the income phase, you can discard / return the rebellion markers as the rebellions are now considered to be quashed.

Example: In the scenario below, player receives $3 \times 3 = 9$ coins + 2 coins = 11 coins income

If the player had not had 1 capital in rebellion, they would have received $4 \times 3 = 12 + 2$ coins = 14 coins income



Players also receive further 2 coins income in this phase for each market space which they control.

3.3.5 Winter (Advanced Rules only)

If you are playing the advanced rues variant and it is the end of season 2, 4, 6 or 8 then the winter phase occurs. There are two elements to the winter season, being unit wintering and food scarcity.

Unit Wintering

Units must winter in one of the following spaces:

- Any space on a connected route to a capital under the players control.
- A temple space.
- A controlled prefecture space. (prefecture card must be in play.)

Note: **Connected routes** are adjacent spaces containing a single player's units, connected to a capital controlled by that player.

Even after retreat, You cannot occupy any of the above spaces if already occupied by another player's units.

Food Scarcity

A further restriction on wintering units is that a maximum of 1 unit per player may spend winter in a food scarce region, unless the player controls at least one agricultural colony in that zone (prior to retreat).

Units that are not in a space where they are permitted to winter may retreat to the nearest legal space, but observing these rules:

Units can only retreat through empty spaces, spaces containing their own units or temple spaces.

You may retreat one unit or stack of units at no cost.

For every additional units or stacks of units that needs to retreat, you must pay 1 coin. You may choose to eliminate units instead of paying the price of retreat.

3.3.6 Attrition

During this phase, you must pay the upkeep of your Empire. Pay 1 coin for every unit, except for scouts.

During this phase, you count the number of units you have on the board and subtract the number of scouts. You then pay that amount of coin.

If you cannot afford all of the cost then you must eliminate the number of units required so that you can afford to pay for the cost.

Note: A strength '2' unit and a strength '1' unit both count as 1 unit for this purpose.

Discarding uncontrolled prefectures

If a prefecture card is in play but not controlled by a player it can be obtained any player that moves a unit or conquers that space. However, at the end of each season, any prefecture cards that are not controlled by players are discarded (removed from the game). This is true even if the prefecture is controlled by neutral armies.

3.3.7 Deployment

Deployment phase consists of 3 stages;

- Purchase new units
- Deploy new units
- Re-deployment along connected routes

Purchase new units

To purchase new units you need to pay both *coins* and *deployment points*.

You receive *deployment points* equal to your popularity + controlled prefectures. You may also receive bonus deployment points from playing a specific action card for its event which gives extra deployment points for that season.

There are several ways you can spend your deployment points. There are no tokens in the game to represent deployment points as they are consumed immediately. Deployment points cannot be saved from one season to the next.

The table below shows the cost of new units that can be purchased during the deployment phase. Note that you may purchase neutral armies and add them to existing neutral armies at no coin cost.

For quick and easy reference, the game contains 2 card with the deployment costs:

DEPLOYMENT	COSTS		
Total Deployment Costs = Popularity + Prefecture			
	COIN	DP	MAX
Scout	1	1	6 total
Unit	2	2	N/A
Neutral Army	0	2	2 per season

Deploy new units

When purchasing a scout, these are taken from the face up **scout pile**. If you purchase another type of unit, these are taken, at random, from the face down **unit pile**. This means that you may receive a strength '1' or a strength '2' unit for the purchase of a single unit.

New units are deployed to any capital city under your control. You may also have other units to redeploy such as your emperor if captured during the seasons action phase.

Re-deployment along connected routes

After deploying new units, you may redeploy units along connected routes. You can move any unit to any space along the connected route. As units are face down, this is done in secret and allows you to keep your precise unit positions unknown.

Notes: Connected routes must be connected to a capital city. Spaces connected to temples and prefectures but not to capital cities are not considered to be connected routes, so do not qualify for redeployment.

3.3.8 Other Rules

Units & splitting

Players may choose to split a strength '2' unit into two strength '1' units at any time. However, 2 strength '1' units will, during the attrition phase, require double the upkeep of a single strength '2' unit, so players should think carefully before making this decision. When splitting units, the player is permitted to look at the face down unit pile in order to select strength '1' units. Strength '1' units can never be combined into a strength '2' unit.

If a strength '2' unit absorbs 1 hit point of damage then it must be replaced by a strength '1' unit. Again, the player will need to examine his face down chits in the unit pile to find strength '1' units.

In both scenarios the *unit pile* is mixed thoroughly after units are found so that future units are selected at random.

Entrapment

Either via stratagem or tribute cards, you may be granted the ability to entrap an opponent stack.

Follow the instructions on the card. Stacks or units can only be targeted for entrapment if they cannot trace a connected route to a capital under their control.

If entrapment is successful then place a **trapped** marker on the target stack / unit. This stack / unit cannot move or attack whilst trapped. When a unit of the trapped player moves into or passes through an adjacent space to the trapped stack / units remove the *trapped* marker as the stack / unit is no longer deemed trapped.

Trapped units cannot retreat during winter and are eliminated. An exception to this, however, that trapped units in a controlled prefecture or temple space are not eliminated during winter as they are permitted to winter in these spaces. Exception is that If the *Red Turban* tribute is in effect, trapped units in affected player's temples may be eliminated if they are not on a connected route to a capital.

Piracy

Japanese piracy raids may be initiated as a result of both the *Japanese Pirates* action card and the control of Nagasaki prefecture which grants the controlling player the option to use action points to make piracy raids. In each case, follow the instructions on the cards.

Whereas the Japanese Pirates action card allows a one off attempt at a piracy raid, control of Nagasaki when in play as a prefecture grants the ongoing ability to use action points to raid. The ability transfers to an opponent if they subsequently gain control of Nagasaki and is lost to all players if the Nagasaki prefecture becomes discarded.

Looting

The Wanli Emperor tribute card grants a one off opportunity to attempt looting on an opponent. Follow the instructions on the card.

The *Loot* action card allows you to attempt a one off looting of an opponent, but to do so you must have a unit in one of the target player's capital regions. Follow instructions on card.

Plague & Sanitation

The *Plague* action card can have a devastating effect on units on all sides and upset the balance of power The only way to protect units against the potential impact of plague is to build sanitation in a space. Using the *sanitation* action card and place a sanitation marker in the space which becomes protected from plague attacks.

RULES clarifications & FAQ

After successful combat, player may choose to advance any or none of the units into the target space.

When attacking from a space, you may choose to include or exclude any units from that stack. Units revealed as face up are included in the attack.

Card #16 If a '2' strength unit is reduced to '1' strength from the play of this card's action points, a '1' strength unit is considered as captured.

An empty capital can be defended by units in the capital region. Entering an empty capital, controlled by another player constitutes and "attack".

When defending a space in a capital region, the defender chooses which units to move to the space being attacked after the attacker has revealed the attacking units.

CREDITS & ATTRIBUTIONS

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