

Dectana

(that's "Decktet" plus "Zarcana")

A Decktet+Icehouse game by Ryan Hackel
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Players: 2 - 5

Time: 30 - 60 minutes

Dectana is a game of finding and defending the most valuable territories on a board made of cards. You will need to grow an army of pyramids, make best use of your hand of cards, and even invoke the powers of the board itself. Can you retain your stake at victory against your opponents' competing endeavors?

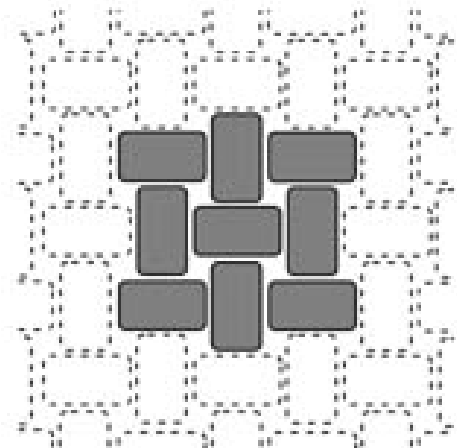
If you've played Zarcana, Gnostica, Zark City, or Pantopia before, this game will feel very familiar. However, knowledge of those games is neither necessary nor assumed.

Setup

Each player will need three nests of pyramids. (A nest is one small, one medium, and one large.) A 3HOUSE set (three Treehouse sets) will be sufficient to support up to five players.

You Will Need: 3 nests per player 2 Decktets

Shuffle two Decktets together and deal a random 3x3 board face up, as shown. Alternate the card direction to highlight that corner-to-corner is not adjacent.



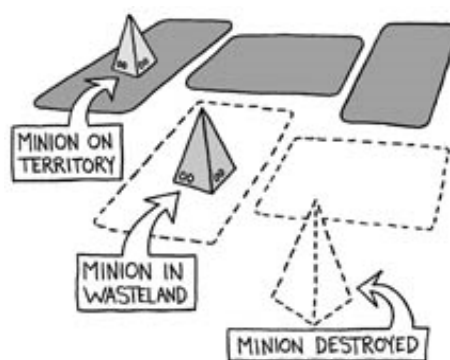
Deal three cards to each player. Choose one player to go first by whatever method you prefer.

In reverse turn order, starting with the last player, each player places a small pyramid on any territory or wasteland space, even if it is already occupied.

Terminology

A *space* is any place on the board where cards and pyramids may be placed. Spaces are adjacent if they share an orthogonal side with each other. Spaces are never adjacent diagonally.

A *territory* is a space that contains at least one card. If there are multiple cards there, only the top card is considered. If the top card is removed, then the topmost remaining card is considered instead.



A *wasteland* space is a space that is not a territory, but is adjacent to one.

The *void* is any space beyond the wasteland, a space that is adjacent only to wasteland spaces. Pyramids and cards cannot be played here, and any pyramid in the void is immediately destroyed.

A piece on the board may point in any of the four cardinal directions or point straight up. To "orient" a piece is to change its direction to any of the five legal directions.

A *flat* pyramid lies on its side. It can point in any of the four cardinal directions. It is pointing at the nearest adjacent space in that direction, whether wasteland or territory. It never points at a space two or more steps away.

An *upright* pyramid stands on its base. It is pointing at nothing in particular.

Gameplay

On your turn, choose and do one of these five options:

1. Activate the power of a card on the board that you occupy. When you activate a card on the board, you may use any one of its suits.
2. Use, then discard, a card from your hand. When you use a card from your hand, you may use any one of its suits.
3. Reorient any number of your pyramids.
4. If you have no pyramids on the board, place a small pyramid on any territory or wasteland.
5. Discard your entire hand, then draw that many cards plus one.

When using option 1 or 2 above, you first must choose one of your pyramids in play to use the ability. Some abilities require the pyramid to be upright or flat. Please see "Suit Powers" for a full description of these requirements. If none of your pyramids in play meet the requirement, you cannot use the ability.



Treat Crowns as triples, bearing the same suit three times. Activating a Crown from the hand or from the board grants you up to three uses of that suit, provided you have enough legal targets. You can choose the same or different pyramids with each activation. Crowns have no point value (count as zero).



If your Decktets contain Pawns and Excuses: Pawns have three suits, and work just like a typical two-suited card, with the additional benefit of greater utility. However, Pawns have no point value (count as zero). The Excuse has no suits, no value, and serves merely as an inconvenience to anyone unlucky enough to draw it. Any card, even a card worth zero points, has a higher value than the Excuse. (*If your Decktets contain Courts, treat them as Pawns.*)

The maximum "cards in hand" limit is six. You can ignore this rule while you are drawing cards, but once you finish, you will need to immediately discard down to six, if you exceed the limit.

As a rule, you cannot do anything to a territory's card if there are any pyramids on it.

Winning

At *any* time, after the deck has been shuffled at least once, anyone may discard three Aces to end the game.

You score points for each card your pyramids solely occupy. Crowns, Pawns, and The Excuse have no point value. Aces are worth one point. All other cards are worth their printed number. If you share a territory with any other players, no player receives points for it.

The player with the highest score is the winner.

If there is a tie for highest score, the tied player with more pyramids on the board is the winner.

Credits


This game is a direct descendant of John Cooper's classic Icehouse game, Zarcana, as well as Zarcana's reimplementation as Gnostica developed by John Cooper, Jacob Davenport, Kory Heath, and Kristin Matherly. Much of this game's mechanics are directly ported over from those earlier works, and Dectana is heavily in their debt. Some of the images in these rules came from the Zarcana rules, and I hope everyone's cool with that.


The Decktet itself is the work of P.D. Magnus. It is free to download and print, thanks to its Creative Commons license (by-nc-sa 3.0). You should have no issues with making a pair of your own Decktets for this game. You can also buy professionally-printed Decktets directly from www.fecundity.com/pmagnus/decktet.


Lastly, Icehouse pyramids were developed by John Cooper and Andrew Looney, and are the intellectual property of Looney Labs. Fan-made Icehouse games are strongly encouraged, and this work is no exception. If you enjoy Icehouse games, of which there are dozens, you should buy a few Treehouse sets from Looney Labs at www.LooneyLabs.com or any of their retailers.


Suit Powers


Each suit lets you perform one of its abilities each time you use it.


	<p>Choose one of your upright pyramids. Add your small pyramid upright to that territory. If no small pyramid is available, you cannot do this.</p>
<p>SUNS have the power to <i>Create</i></p>	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids that points at an empty wasteland space. Put the top card of the deck on that space.</p>

	<p>Choose one of your upright pyramids. Replace it with your pyramid that is exactly one size larger. If no such pyramids are available, you cannot do this.</p>
<p>LEAVES have the power to <i>Grow</i></p>	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids that points at an empty territory. Take a card from your hand and place it on top. The new card must be larger in value than the old card. (<i>Kings and Pawns have zero value. Aces are one.</i>)</p>

	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids. Move it in the pointed direction a number of spaces up to its pip count. It ends movement standing upright.</p>
<p>WAVES have the power to <i>Move</i></p>	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids pointing at an empty territory. Move that card in the target direction to the nearest wasteland space. Any pyramids in that wasteland space now occupy the card.</p>

	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids that points at an occupied space. Use X movement points, where X is the pushing pyramid's pip count. Each point moves one pip one space. Pushed pyramids retain their orientation. Pyramids pushed into the void are destroyed.</p>
<p>MOONS have the power to <i>Steal</i></p>	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids that points at an empty territory. Put that territory's top card into your hand, then observe the hand limit of six.</p>

	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids that points at an occupied space. Shrink X points of opposing pyramids from the target space, where X is your pyramid's pip count. If there are no pyramids of the suitable size available, use the smallest available size of the nearest value.</p>
<p>WYRMS have the power to <i>Destroy</i></p>	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids that points at an empty territory. Destroy (discard) the top card of that territory.</p>

	<p>Choose one of your upright pyramids. Draw X cards, where X is the pyramid's pip count. After drawing, observe the hand limit of six.</p>
<p>KNOTS have the power to <i>Draw</i></p>	<p>Choose one of your flat pyramids that points at an empty territory. Draw X cards, where X is the territory's value, then destroy both the pyramid and the territory from play. After drawing, observe the hand limit of six.</p>