

**the earthman's burden**

**rules**

# 1 SETUP

## 1.1 Components and Terminology

The **main board** consists of:

- **Worlds** around the outside. Each has between two and seven **regions** within it, and an **orbit** above it.
- **Trajectories** connecting the worlds, in three rings. The outermost ring contains **Approach** trajectories, the next ring contains **Interplanetary** trajectories and the central disc is the **Solar System** trajectory.
- When moving on the main board, arrows must be followed either backwards or forwards unless explicitly specified otherwise; moving towards the centre of the board is a move **skyward**, and moving towards the edge of the board is a move **worldward**.

The **victory board** consists of:

- The **Victory Track**, with spaces from 0 to 50 and a threshold at space 30.
- The **Power Track**, with spaces from 0 to 100 and a threshold at space 8.

Each **player board** consists of:

- The **Economy Pool**, to show how much you can support that you haven't actually built yet.
- The **Discontent Pool**, to show you how unhappy the general population is with your rule.
- The **AI Pool**, to show how much you can influence events with the power of AI.

The **technology board** consists of:

- **Technologies**, with a brief description of what they entail
- A **research track** for each technology, with a number of steps indicating how hard it is to research.

A **First Player marker** shows who took the first turn.

Counters may have different meanings depending on where they are.

- **Player counters** for each player can represent:
  - **Fleets** when in trajectories. If they are flipped to show the warning side, those fleets are **At Risk**.
  - **Developments** when in regions. If the top development on a stack is flipped to show the warning side, that region is **At Risk**.
  - **Resource** when in the Economy Pool.
  - **AI Thoughts** when in the AI Pool.
  - [Probably some other things like techs]
- **Devastation counters** can represent:
  - Damage or natural phenomena when in regions; these need to be overcome before colonisation can occur.
  - Generalised discontent when in a player's Discontent Pool.

**UN Sanctions** tokens show if the UN is unhappy with a player.

**Rolls** are always on d6. It is possible to need rolls higher than 6 due to modifiers:

- If 7+ is required, re-roll any 6s, needing 4+ to succeed.
- If 8+ is required, re-roll any 6s, needing 6 to succeed.
- If 9+ is required, this is not achievable.

## 1.2 Optional Rules

Players mutually agree which, if any, of the following rules are in operation for the duration of the game.

- **1.2.1 Skynet:** The game might end with AI taking over and everyone losing. For full details, see Section 6.1: Skynet.
- **1.2.2 Research Collaborations:** You can't just give each other technologies, but you can make it easier for them to get them. For full details, see Section 6.2: Research Collaborations.
- **1.2.3 Territorial Agreements:** You can't just sell Greenland without people getting unhappy. For full details, see Section 6.3: Territorial Agreements.
- **1.2.4 Prelude:** You get more things at the beginning for a faster game start. For full details, see Section 6.4: Prelude.
- **1.2.5 Espionage:** Add another dimension of messing around with other people's stuff. For full details, see Section 6.5: Espionage.

## 1.3 Boards

- Place the main board centrally.
- Place the victory board next to the main board, with a counter for each player on the 0 box of the Victory Track and on the 0 box of the Power Track.
- Place the technology board next to the main board.
- Give each player a player board.

## 1.3 The State of the System

- Place a UN development in every region on Earth.
- Place a Devastation marker in half the regions (rounding down) of every world **except** the Earth.
- Place a(n extra) Devastation marker in all regions on Venus and Io.

## 1.4 First Player

Determine a first player by any agreeable means. Give them the First Player marker.

## 1.5 Initial Deployment

Each player has 3 resource in their Economy Pool and 3 Fleets in orbit of Earth.

## 1.6 Beginning the game

Starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise, players take turns as per section 2: Turn Order.

## 2 TURN ORDER

When it is your turn, go through the sections below - Score, Risk, Movement, Fleet Actions, Development Actions and UN Assistance - in that order. In this section, “you” refers to the player whose turn it is.

### 2.1 Score

For each of the following which are true, move your counter as specified up the Victory Point track.

- Do you have at least 8 Power, and strictly more power than **at least half** the other players? If so, gain a Victory Point on the Victory Point Track.
- Do you have at least 8 Power, and strictly more power than **all** the other players? If so, gain another Victory Point on the Victory Point Track.
- Do you have any levels in the Artificial Intelligence technology? If so, you **must** roll once per level (**not** per remaining Thought) and, for each 5+ you roll, gain a Victory Point on the Victory Point track.

If you have more than 30 points at the end of this phase, or if you are more than 10 points ahead of any other player, game end is triggered. Continue until the player to the right of the first player (which may be you) finishes their turn, then end the game as per Section 4: Game End.

If all other players with units on the map agree that you have won at this stage, then the game immediately ends and you win without need for Section 4: Game End. The UN, and indeed the null player, always agree that you have won.

If all players agree that peace is, in fact, possible, the game ends with no winner; the outcome is Peace In Our Time.

### 2.2 Risk

#### 2.2.1 Spreading Risk

For each of your fleets and regions which are At Risk, roll once. For each 2 or less, risk spreads: if there are any other fleets of yours in the same orbit or trajectory which are not At Risk, or any other regions of yours on the same world, one of them becomes At Risk; if there are not, one of your existing fleets, or **all** the developments in one of your existing regions, is/are removed as per Section 3.3: Removing Fleets and Section 3.4: Removing Developments respectively.

Note that risk can only spread from fleets to other fleets, or from regions to other regions.

#### 2.2.2 General Discontent

For each Devastation marker in your Discontent pool, roll once. For each 2 or less:

- Set one of your fleets which is not yet At Risk to be so or, if there are none not already At Risk, remove one of your fleets - your choice which fleet in both cases.
- Roll again - for each 1 on this second roll, there is a mutiny! If you have any fleets which are At Risk in the same orbit or trajectory as any fleets which are not At Risk, remove one of these which is At Risk and one which is not from the same orbit or trajectory. Otherwise, remove two fleets which are At Risk from the same orbit or trajectory, as per Section 3.3: Removing Fleets. Within the restrictions given, it is your choice which fleets mutiny.

## 2.3 Movement

In order:

### 2.3.1 Approach Trajectories

Each of your fleets in any of the Approach trajectories **must** make one move worldward.

If you arrive where any other player has fleets in orbit or developments on the world, and you do not already have fleets in orbit, then - starting with the player to your left and going clockwise - they may nominate whether they will use Defensive Fire. They must all nominate before any actually fires.

Anyone who nominates to use Defensive Fire then rolls dice - one per two fleets they have on that world, rounding up, and two per region containing developments. For each 5+, you must remove a fleet from that orbit, as per Section 3.3: Removing Fleets.

If you have a UN Sanctions token, the UN will choose to use Defensive Fire.

### 2.3.2 Interplanetary Trajectories

Each of your fleets in any of the Interplanetary trajectories **must** make one move worldward.

### 2.3.3 Solar System Trajectory

Each of your fleets in the central Solar System trajectory **must** make one move worldward.

### 2.3.4 Launches

Each of your fleets in an orbit which did **not** just arrive there in section 2.3.1: Approach Trajectories this turn **may** make as many moves as you like skyward.

## 2.4 Fleet Actions

Each fleet in orbit of a world may participate in one action each turn. For each world where you have fleets in orbit, nominate which actions each of those fleets are taking, then resolve those actions. You cannot “save up” some fleets and nominate later what actions they will take.

You may resolve worlds in any order, but within each of those worlds, the actions should be performed in the order given below.

### 2.4.1 Open Fire

Each fleet nominates a target player with fleets or developments on or in orbit of the same world. Roll one die per fleet performing the attack. For each 5+, that player loses a fleet in that orbit as per Section 3.3: Removing Fleets. If they have none left, every two rolls of 5+ (or 6+ on Earth if the UN still have developments there) which remain remove all developments in a region on that world - their choice which - as per Section 3.4: Removing Developments.

These rolls have a penalty of -1 when made by any fleet which is At Risk.

If you do this on any world where the UN has developments, you receive a UN Sanctions token if you do not already have one, and move all resource on any that you do have back to your Economy Pool. If you actually target UN units, then as soon as you have resolved the action, they use the Defence action as per section 2.5.3: Defence.

### 2.4.2 Expansion

Each group of 1 to 3 fleets (your choice of partition) attempts to expand your empire. Roll once per group.

Fleets in group	1	2	3
Roll needed	4+	3+	Automatic

For each success, you may:

- EITHER remove a Devastation counter from a region on that world
- OR, in a region of that world without any other counters on it (or, if on Earth, with at most one of your counters on it), add a development as per Section 3.2: Adding Developments.

### 2.4.3 Overthrow

Each fleet nominates a target player with developments on the same world. Roll one die per fleet attempting the overthrow. For every two rolls of 5+ (or 6+ on Earth if the UN still have developments there), the target player must:

- EITHER set one of their regions on the world At Risk which is not already so
- OR remove all their developments from one of their At Risk regions on the world as per Section 3.4: Removing Developments and replace it with **one** of yours as per Section 3.2 Adding Developments, putting this new development immediately At Risk.

It is their choice which, in each case.

These rolls have a penalty of -1 when made by any fleet which is At Risk.

### 2.4.4 Pacification

Each fleet rolls once. For every two rolls of 5+, you may:

- EITHER set a fleet in the same orbit which is At Risk not to be so any more
- OR set a region on the same world which is At Risk not to be so any more
- OR, if you have any developments on the same world, remove one Devastation marker from your Discontent Pool and one resource from your Economy Pool
- OR, if you have a UN Sanctions token and you or the UN have developments on the same world, you may move one resource from your Economy Pool onto the token. Should the token now have five resource, you lose the token and gain the resource back to your Economy Pool.

## 2.5 Development Actions

You may resolve worlds on which you have developments in any order; however, for each world, you must nominate what actions each is taking, and in what groups, before rolling results for that world. Each development may participate in at most one action.

### 2.5.1 Construction

Each group of 1 to 3 developments (your choice of partition) may attempt to build fleets.

- One development may construct once with a Risk roll, needing 4+ to succeed.
- Two developments may construct once without risk.
- Three developments may construct once without risk, or twice with a Risk roll, needing 3+ to succeed.

Each successful construction creates a fleet in orbit of that world as per Section 3.1: Adding Fleets.

If a Risk roll is failed, one of your regions on that world which is not already At Risk becomes so. If there are none, lose **all** the developments in one of your regions on that world as per Section 3.4: Removing Developments. You still construct the fleets you attempted to construct.

### 2.5.2 Research

Each development rolls once. For each 5+, you may:

- EITHER place one of your counters in the bottom bulb of a research track on the technology board
- OR move one of your counters up a research track. Should this result in it entering the actual technology, you gain access to (another level of) that technology, represented by your having (another) counter in that box. See Section 4: Technologies for the effects and costs of the various technologies.

These rolls have a penalty of -1 when made by any development which is At Risk.

### 2.5.3 Defence

Each region (**not** development) nominates a target player and rolls three times. For each 5+, that player loses a fleet in orbit of that world as per section 3.3: Removing Fleets. Note that this fire is entirely defensive; developments cannot directly target other developments. This uses the actions for all developments in the region.

These rolls have a penalty of -1 when made by any development which is At Risk.

### 2.5.4 Political Influence

This action must be taken by all the developments you have on a world (though you do not have to control all the regions to achieve this), and you must not yet have a Political Influence counter on that world, and you must have at least three fleets in orbit of that world. Remove as many fleets as you like from that orbit as per Section 3.3: Removing Fleets, except that you must put the counters off to the side until you finish Section 2 entirely, at which point they may be moved back into your Economy Pool.

Roll once:

Fleets in group	3 to 4	5 to 6	7 to 9	10 to 12	13 or more
Roll needed	5+	4+	3+	2+	Automatic

If you succeed, place a Political Influence counter next to one of your regions on that world, and gain as many Power as you have developments already on that world.

## 2.6 UN Assistance

If you do **not** have a UN Sanctions token and there are still UN Developments on Earth, you **may**, once per turn after taking development actions:

- EITHER add a fleet in orbit of Earth as per Section 3.1: Adding Fleets, except that the UN will not support worker oppression and so you may not opt to take discontent
- OR make two Research rolls as per Section 2.5.2: Research.

## 3 ADDING AND REMOVING UNITS

### 3.1 Adding Fleets

When called upon to add a fleet, you may:

- EITHER take a resource from your Economy Pool and add it as a fleet in whichever orbit is specified
- OR add a new fleet in whichever orbit is specified and place a Devastation Marker in your Discontent Pool.

### 3.2 Adding Developments

When called upon to add a development to any region:

- Add two resource to your Economy Pool.
- Move one space up the Power track; move a second space up if it is the first in a region and the world has one of your Political Influence counters on it or if the world is Earth.

### 3.3 Removing Fleets

When called upon to remove a fleet from the main board, place it as a resource in your Economy Pool, **unless** you are removing it as a result of Section 3.4: Removing Developments.

### 3.4 Removing Developments

When called upon to remove a development from the main board:

- Remove two resources from your Economy Pool. For each such resource you cannot (or don't want to) remove, you must:
  - EITHER remove a fleet from the board entirely (**not** moving it to the Economy Pool, as you would normally when removing a fleet)
  - OR add a Devastation marker to your Discontent pool, and immediately roll once; on a 1, one of your fleets on the board which is not already At Risk, if there are any - your choice which - becomes At Risk.
- Move one space down the Power Track, back towards zero.
- If it is the last development in a region, you must also replace it with a Devastation Counter in that region; move another space down the Power track if the world has one of your Political Influence counters on it or if the world is Earth.
- If it is the last development you have on a world, and you have a Political Influence counter on that world, remove the Political Influence counter.

## 4 GAME END

If game end has been triggered by Section 2.1: Score, and the player to the right of the first player has finished their turn, then every player should resolve Section 2.1: Score once each. The player with the highest score after this is complete is the winner. It is possible, in the case of ties, that there are multiple winners.

## 5 TECHNOLOGIES

The following technologies are available to players. Only one level in a technology is needed for it to be available as a prerequisite to another.

### 5.1 Artificial Intelligence

- Prerequisites: At least 3 different technologies
- Maximum level: Unlimited
- Research track steps: 7
- Effect: At the end of each of your turns, put counters in your AI Pool until you have as many AI Thoughts as you have levels in this technology. At any point in your turn or that of another player **except** Section 2.1: Score, you may expend a Thought to force a die to be re-rolled - your choice which.

### 5.2 Attack

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 5
- Effect: When rolling in Sections 2.4.1: Open Fire and 2.5.3: Defence, or when you use Defensive Fire in another player's Section 2.3.1: Approach, your rolls have a bonus of +1 per level.

### 5.3 Durability

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 5
- Effect: When another player is rolling to do damage which targets you in their Sections 2.4.1: Open Fire and 2.5.3: Defence, or when they use Defensive Fire in your Section 2.3.1: Approach, their rolls have a penalty of -1 per level.

### 5.4 Active Defences

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 3
- Effect: When your regions attack in Section 2.5.3: Defence, or when you use Defensive Fire in another player's Section 2.3.1: Approach, each region rolls one extra die per level.

### 5.5 Influence

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 5
- Effect: When rolling in Section 2.4.3: Overthrow, your rolls have a bonus of +1 per level.

### 5.6 Unity

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 5
- Effect: When another player is rolling to do political damage which targets you in their Section 2.4.3: Overthrow, their rolls have a penalty of -1 per level.

### 5.7 Stability

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 5
- Effect: When rolling in section 2.4.4: Pacification, your rolls have a bonus of +1 per level.

## 5.8 Spaceflight

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 2
- Research track steps: 7
- Effect: For each level you have in this technology, you **may** take the actions in Sections 2.3.1: Approach, 2.3.2: Interplanetary and 2.3.3: Solar System before you would “normally” take section 2.3.1: Approach. Therefore, if you have two levels in this technology, your fleets which start the turn in a trajectory might make up to three moves during the turn.

## 5.9 Launch

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 1
- Research track steps: 7
- Effect: You **may** choose to take the Launch action in Section 2.3.4: Launch **before** you take (any of) the movement actions in Sections 2.3.1: Approach, 2.3.2: Interplanetary and 2.3.3: Solar System, including any granted by the Spaceflight technology. This does not stop you taking it again after you have taken those actions.

## 5.10 Research

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 5
- Effect: When rolling in Section 2.5.2: Research, your rolls have a bonus of +1 per level.

## 5.11 Colonisation

- Prerequisites: None
- Maximum level: 2
- Research track steps: 3
- Effect: When taking an Expansion action in Section 2.4.2: Expansion, you may treat your groups of fleets as having one more fleet in them per level.

## 5.12 Nanotechnology

- Prerequisites: Any one other technology
- Maximum level: 2
- Research track steps: 5
- Effect: You may build +1 extra development per level on regions where you already have developments (just as you can by default on Earth; this stacks with the Earth bonus).

## 5.13 Von Neumann Engines

- Prerequisites: Nanotechnology (4.12), OR any three other different technologies
- Maximum level: 3
- Research track steps: 7
- Effect: ?

## 6 OPTIONAL RULES

### 6.1: Skynet

In Section 1.1: Components and Terminology, a deck of 20 **Unexpected AI Thoughts** cards exists to raise some of these issues. 5 cards have no Rogue symbols, 5 cards have one, 5 cards have two and 5 cards have 3.

In Section 1.3: Boards, the deck of Unexpected AI Thoughts cards is put next to the Power track, and a Devastation marker is placed on the 0 slot of the Power track.

If in Section 2.1: Score, a roll for Artificial Intelligence which gets a 1 causes an unexpected thought. Draw the top card from the deck and read the text to find out what happened, then put it on the discard pile. Move the Devastation marker as many spaces up the Power track as there are symbols on the card. If the Devastation marker reaches space 15, something unfortunate has happened and humanity as we know it ceases to exist; all players lose.

For example, a card might read: *“Due to an off-by-one error, instead of seeking to benefit the comfort of humanity (homo sapiens), the AI optimises the solar system for the comfort of rabbit's foot fern (humata tyermanni) and begins terraforming every inhabitable world for the proliferation of as much rabbit's foot fern as possible. Unfortunately, humans are not directly required in the lifecycle of humata tyermanni.”*, and have two Rogue symbols.

### 6.2 Research Collaborations

You may not just grant someone else access to your research - it takes time to develop understanding and build it into a civilisation's infrastructure. However, at the end of your turn, you may share some research with each other player once. They may immediately act as if they had just succeeded in a research roll in Section 2.5.2: Research in one technology - of your choice, not theirs - where you have more levels in the technology than they do.

### 6.3 Territorial Agreements

You may not just give other people developments and fleets - loyalty must be won, and people don't appreciate having their lives and allegiances uprooted. You may only do so at the end of your turn.

- It is treated as you losing fleets or developments and the recipient gaining them as per the rules in Section 3: Adding and Removing Units, except that no devastation is created when developments are “removed”.
- However, each fleet or development thus transferred must immediately roll once; on a 4+, it becomes At Risk if it wasn't already, or spreads risk as per Section 2.2.1: Spreading Risk if it was.
- Players may, **before** rolling for risk, refuse units thus transferred; fleets thus refused are destroyed, and developments thus refused are given to the UN (who must then roll for risk as if they had accepted them).
- If you transfer one development on a region, you must transfer them all, to the same player.

### 6.4: Prelude

If **and only if** rule 1.2.4: Prelude was agreed, then after completing Section 1.5: Initial Deployment, take Prelude turns starting with the player to the first player's right and proceeding anticlockwise until each player has taken three Prelude turns. For each one, you may:

- EITHER place a fleet in orbit of Earth
- OR place a resource in your Economy Pool and place or move a counter on the Technology board as if you had passed a roll in Section 2.5.2: Research
- OR place a resource in your Economy Pool and move one of your fleets as many moves skyward as you like.

## 6.5: Espionage

[This optional rule is not yet written]