



Free Game # 43 from Invisible City Productions, Inc.

**A game of strategy, resource management, planning, and
diplomacy for three to eight players.
by Brandon W., Dave ?, Jonathan A. Leistiko and Valerie W.**

Object:

To place as many of your pieces on the board as possible while blocking the other players from doing likewise.

You Need:

- A chess board.
- One Icehouse set (15 pieces of the same color, five pieces of each size) for each player.

Setting Up:

- Choose an Icehouse set. Set your pieces in front of you, off the board. This is your stash.
- With three players, play on a 5x6 board
- With 4 to six players, play on a 6x6 board.
- With 7 or more players, play on an 8x8 board.
- Randomly choose a player to go first.
- On your first turn, take a piece from your stash and place it upright on a square on the board. It can be a 1, 2, or 3 point piece. This is your starting tower. You may place your starting tower anywhere. All future towers you place on the board must be spored in a vacant space targeted by a branch point you control (Don't worry, we'll explain what that means later.).

Play:

On your turn, you can **Build** (Add to an existing tower), **Branch** (Lay pieces off of a tower or tower branch), or **Spore** (Start a new tower in a square targeted by a branch point).

Building:

- To build, cap a tower you control with a piece from your stash. This piece must be one point smaller than the piece it's capping.
- A tower can only support branches that are as long as the number of pieces in the tower. A one-piece tower can have a maximum of four pieces coming off of it. A two-piece tower can have a maximum of 12 pieces coming off of it.

Branching:

- To branch, lay a piece from your stash on its side in a space adjacent to one of your towers or in a space adjacent to one of your existing branches.
- Branch points must point at an adjacent square. Diagonal squares are not valid.
- Branch points coming off of a tower must point away from the tower. Any size piece can branch off of a tower.
- Branch points coming off of the side of a branch point must point away from the source branch point.
- Branch points placed in squares targeted by the branch point they are branching from may not point at branch point they are branching from.
- Pieces coming off of branch points must be one size smaller than the piece that they are branching from. Twos may only branch from threes. Ones may only branch from twos. Nothing can branch from a one.
- Remember, a tower can only support branches that are as long as the number of pieces in the tower. A one-piece tower can have a maximum of four pieces coming off of it. A two-piece tower can have a maximum of 12 pieces coming off of it.

Attacking:

- Branch points automatically attack the adjacent space they're pointing at. If a tower occupies a square that is being attacked, then it is in danger of being neutralized.
- A tower is neutralized if it is attacked by a piece of a size that is not in that tower. If a tower has a 3-unit and a 2-unit piece in it, and it's attacked by a

one-unit piece, then it is neutralized. A tower with one of each piece size in it can not be neutralized.

- The owner of a neutralized tower can not build on it or continue to branch off of it. Branch points on neutralized towers still attack squares that they point at.

Sporing:

- *Targeting* - Branch points target the space they're pointing at (pip) spaces away. A three pip piece targets the space three squares away. A two pip piece targets the space two squares away. A one pip piece targets the adjacent space it points at. It does not matter if there are intervening pieces; the space is still targeted.
- To spore, place a piece from your stash upright in a vacant square that one of your branch points targets. This piece may be any size. This creates a new tower that you can build or branch from on future turns.
- You may not spore a new tower in a position that will instantly neutralize it.
- You may not spore off of a branch point on a neutralized tower.

Example:



Take a look at the example picture above, then try to answer these questions:

- What do the yellow and red dots indicate?
They mark targeted spaces that the yellow and red players can spore to.

- Is the green tower live, or neutralized?
The green tower is being neutralized by the two-unit red piece that's attacking it.
- Is the red tower live or neutralized?
The red tower is live because it has a one-unit piece in it, making it immune to the one-unit yellow piece that's attacking it.
- Why can red spore to the square adjacent to the green tower?
Because the two-unit red piece that's neutralizing the green tower is targeting that space, and targeting is not blocked by pieces in the way.

Winning:

- When one player has no more valid moves, the game ends at the beginning of that player's next turn.
- When the game ends, return all pieces in neutralized towers and branches attached to neutralized towers to their player's stashes.
- Add up the points in your stash at the end of the game. If you have the least points in your stash at the end of the game, then you win.

Variants:

Counting Coup:

Shuffle a poker deck at the start of the game and set it aside. If a player spores a tower that you could neutralize on your next turn, you can say, "Are you sure you want to do that?" That player may take back the move and make a different move. If he or she chooses to do this, then you get a card from the deck. Do not look at it; keep it face down in front of you until the end of the game. When tallying points at the end of the game, look at the cards you have. Subtract one from your score for every Ace through 10 you have. Subtract two from your score for every Jack, Queen, and King you have.

Sprawlgame:

You may build on an opponent's tower that is targeted by a branch point you control. Towers are controlled by the player who controls the top piece on the tower.

Overload:

When you take a Sporing action, you may start a tower in the space you're targeting, then take a build action for each extra piece you have that targets that space. If you have three pieces targeting a space, then you can spore a complete tower in that space in one turn.

Superior Forces:

A tower is only neutralized when the total pip value of attacking pieces exceeds the total pip value of the tower.

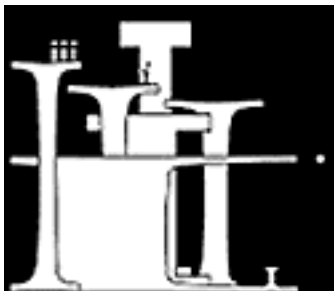
Origin and Credits:

'Roundabout June of 2003, I was itching to make another game with Icehouse pieces. I felt that not enough of the Icehouse games available encouraged building, "3-2-1 towers;" towers with the big one on the bottom and the little on the top.

In early July '03, I was hanging out at Monday night Games Night. Dave said that he and Brandon wanted to see a game where you got to build something neat; a game where you could look at it once the game was over and say, "Hey, look at what we made." I took that idea; fused it with some basic ideas I'd had for the tower-building game; and Brandon, Dave, Valerie, and I played it. Players were allowed to spore anywhere on the field, size of sprawl from a tower was unrestricted, and points were tallied according to territory claimed. Valerie suggested connecting height of tower to size of sprawl and I thought of the new scoring rules. After the second game, Dave thought of the stash-based scoring rules.

I'm really happy with how it turned out. It has a remarkable amount of strategy for a game with rules this simple. Thanks to Brandon, Dave, and Valerie for contributing and playing. Thanks to the folks at Loony Labs for making such a cool game piece set.

Unedited as of July 20, 2003.



Free games monthly from Invisible City Productions, Inc.
<http://www.invisible-city.com/games/>