It is dark as you step onto the rocky surface of the arena, listening as the crowd's chattering disperses. Everything is silent for a moment, and then you hear a faint whirring as the energy begins to flow through the arena. With a hiss, the energy wells begin to glow, bathing you in a blue halflight. Then the first of the energy fountains bursts forth, and the chattering in the crowd begins again. Both you and your opponent are fighting to gain the title of Master Elementalist, and both of you will stop at nothing to achieve it. As the rest of the energy fountains activate, you start to summon your Elementals —strange creatures made of pure energy—and place them under a spell of concealment. The final round of the Elemental Tournament has begun.

Overview

Elemental is a game of hidden information and simultaneous action for 2 players. Each round, both you and your opponent will move one of your concealed elementals on the board. Each elemental can defeat two others on the board, so you must use stealth, cunning, and calculated risk to get your elementals to the right location. Use the information you have to control the arena and strive for one of two victory conditions.

Crafting the Game

Elemental can be crafted from 2 d6 (preferably numbered instead of with pips), 8 small tokens of any kind to represent crystals, and an old set of checkers. If you do not have an old set of checkers, then other good options include poker chips, backgammon checkers, or 1-inch wooden discs purchased from a craft or hardware store. You will just need 12 each of 2 different colors.

First, cut out the board by making 2 straight cuts on the sides. Then, cut out the movement mats from the black and white pages. This will leave you with the 36 circles. These are ¾" wide, and will need to be punched out or cut out individually. Each color will get the following pieces: water, earth, fire, ice, wind, either light or dark, and the numbers 1-6 in both the full-energy and half-energy versions. The elementals should be glued individually to the checkers. The numbers should go on either side of a checker. One side should contain the full-energy art, and the other the half-energy art. At the end, each color should contain 6 double-sided numbers and 6 single-sided elementals.

Setup

Determine which player is black and which is white, and distribute the pieces. Set up your movement mat so that its six directions correspond to the board's directions. Then, assign the number pieces to your elementals. These numbers are purely for identification; they have no bearing on the strength of the piece. Place them on the board in their starting positions. Finally, give each player 1 crystal and place the remaining 6 to the side of the board. You are now ready to begin the game

Round Order

Round order can be broken down into three basic phases: **movement**, **fighting**, and **resolution**. One must be complete before moving to the next phase.

Movement

Each player has one movement mat and a d6 movement die. During movement, you and your opponent will rotate the die so that a number is facing up. This number corresponds to the piece you intend to move this round. When both of you have chosen your movement, you will simultaneously place your dice on the movement mat on either the **inner ring**, **outer ring**, or the **middle circle**. This is considered one move. The available moves are as follows:

Move (Inner Ring) – This is the most basic form of movement. Place the die on one of the six available directions. You will move your elemental one space in that direction to the space indicated.

Dash (Outer Ring) – *1 Crystal*. Place the die on one of the twelve available directions. You will move to the corresponding space, two spaces away from your starting location. You may not pass through your own piece. If you move through your opponent's piece, the dash is canceled, and you will fight on that space. As a special note, each piece may, for its very first move, dash instead of move. *This is a free action and does not require a crystal as usual.* This may be applied to summoned pieces as well.

Special Moves (Middle Circle) – These symbols indicate other actions you may take during the movement turn, such as teleporting and summoning. Place your die according to the action you are taking.

> **Teleporting** – You may teleport between the two energy wells for **free**. When your piece is on an energy well, place the die with that elemental's number face-up on the middle circle of the movement mat. When you teleport, if there is a piece on your destination (an elemental or a crystal), that piece will be swapped with yours. *If the opposite piece is your opponent's elemental, and they choose to move it, then their movement happens first.*

> **Substituting** – *1 Crystal.* When a piece is on the summoning circle, and another element has been defeated and removed, you may spend 1 crystal and a movement to substitute the elements. To indicate this, please place the number of the active piece face-up on the summoning circle. You may now swap the active elemental with any that was removed prior to this turn. ***This action may not be used when the active elemental is Light or Dark.***

> **Summoning** – *2 Crystals.* When a piece has been defeated, it can be placed back on the board at a cost of 2 crystals and a movement. To indicate this, please place the number of the piece you want to summon face-up on the summoning circle. Place the elemental on the board's summoning circle with full energy.

> **Healing** – *1 Crystal.* Healing is unique in that it is the only action in the game that does not require movement or a die to be placed. When one of your pieces is at half energy, and you move it to the summoning circle, you may immediately pay 1 crystal to restore it to full energy.

One principle governs legal movements: two pieces cannot occupy the same space at the end of the round. This results in the following scenarios:

1. You cannot move one of your pieces to the same space as another of your pieces.
2. This means that if one of your pieces currently occupies your summoning circle, you may not summon a piece back onto the board.
3. Because of this, *it **is** possible* to move to a space that your opponent is currently occupying. You will fight that piece to see who gets to remain on the space.

Fighting

When two elementals are within one space of each other, they will fight. All fights happen simultaneously, and can be resolved in any order. However, if two pieces move to the same space, this is a **priority fight**, and will take place prior to any other fights during the round. This must be fully resolved before another fight can occur.

In a fight, both players will uncover their elemental. There is no "attacking piece" or "defending piece". When the elementals fight, the winner is based on elemental advantage. If an elemental fights itself, then there is no winner or loser and neither is knocked back *(note that energy fountains can change this)*. In a priority fight, neither is able to move to the space. For all other battles, the elementals interact according to the following chart:
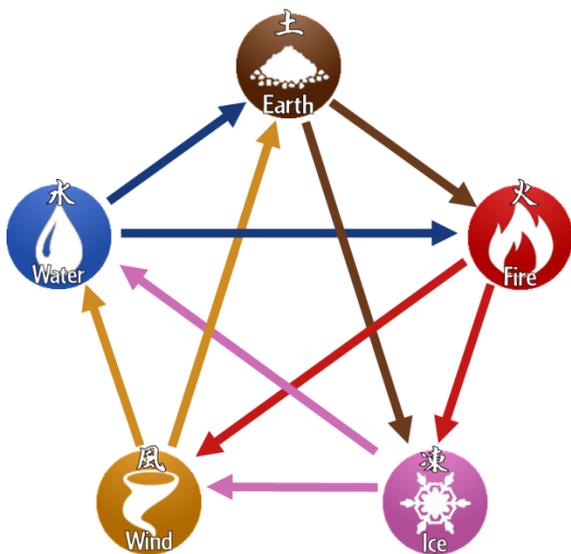
Earth smothers *Fire* and crushes *Ice*

Fire melts *Ice* and feeds on *Wind*

Ice feeds on *Wind* and freezes *Water*

Wind evaporates *Water* and carves *Earth*

Water erodes *Earth* and douses *Fire*

Light and Dark are special elements that take on the properties of whichever energy fountain they are standing on. If they are on the fire fountain, then they fight as a fire elemental. It is important to note that these two elements neither receive nor are affected by offensive bonuses from the fountains. If they are not on a fountain, they cannot be damaged, but also cannot attack. They are simply knocked back. Light and Dark also operate as the player's respective king pieces. The player will be eliminated if they are lost.

Resolution

The number markers have two sides: full energy and half energy. When an elemental loses a fight, it will lose half of its energy and get knocked straight away from the battle (it moves exactly opposite of the piece that beat it). If the space it should be knocked back to is occupied by another of that player's pieces, it will get knocked to the next furthest space from the fight. If 2 options are equally far, the loser may decide where to go. **Note that knockback can trigger a second fight.** So if the "farthest" space is still adjacent to the piece your elemental lost to, it will fight again and be defeated. You may also be knocked back into one of your opponent's pieces, triggering a priority battle.

Knockback is a little bit different for priority battles. When a priority battle happens, refer to the following scenarios:

1. *Both pieces in the priority battle moved, or the one that moved lost:* the losing piece is knocked first back to its original space, and then one more space directly away from the battle, resulting in a knockback of 2 spaces. If the piece dashed, it moves back to its original space.
2. *The losing piece stayed put, teleported, was swapped, or was summoned. The winning piece moved or dashed:* The losing piece is knocked 2 spaces away from the winning piece's starting space.
3. *Both pieces moved, but they are the same element*: the movement of both pieces is canceled, and they return to their original spaces. **If this fight is repeated 3 times in 3 successive turns, both elementals will lose half of their energy from fatigue.**

Defeated Pieces and Crystals

When a piece is already at half energy, and it loses another half of its energy, it is defeated and taken off of the board. When it does, it will create a crystal on the nearest unoccupied energy well. Unoccupied means that it is not currently blocked by either an elemental or a crystal. If there are no unoccupied energy wells, a crystal does not create; the defeated piece is simply removed from the board.

Players may claim a crystal by moving one of their pieces onto the crystal's space. If this also results in a priority battle, then the winner gets the crystal. The crystal is taken into the player's possession for later use. The number of crystals a player has is considered public knowledge. Crystals may be used to perform a **dash** or one of the four **special** movements. Please refer to the movement section for more detail.

Energy Fountains

Energy fountains are sections of the board that consist of a fountain and its 6 adjacent spaces. (There are no energy fountains corresponding to light and dark.) Energy fountains provide an *offensive bonus* to the matching element. So if the fire elemental is standing on the fire fountain, and it fights against ice, fire would get a bonus. Instead of ice going down to half energy, fire will perform a double hit, and ice will be immediately defeated. However, if fire is standing on the fire fountain and it fights water, the fountain offers no defensive bonus. Fire will still lose half of its energy and be knocked back.

Energy fountains can also be used to break ties between the same elements. If two fire elementals are fighting, and only one of them is on the fire fountain, the piece on the fountain will win and the piece not on the fountain will lose half of its energy and be knocked back. If both of them are on the fire fountain, then they are at equal strength and neither is damaged.

Fountains also directly interact with **the Light and Dark elementals**. Light/Dark will take on the properties of whichever fountain they are standing on. If they are standing on fire, they will fight as a fire elemental; if on water, they will fight as a water elemental. So if light is standing on water, and it is fighting the opponent's earth piece, light will win. The opponent's earth will lose half of its energy and be knocked back. If light is standing on water and it fights the opponent's water elemental, then nothing happens. There are two important considerations: **1. Light/Dark do not receive an offensive bonus from the fountain. 2. Light/Dark not affected by another piece's offensive bonus from a fountain. They cannot be defeated in one hit.**

Information

Players may use a pen and paper to keep track of information that they learn during the game. As a gentleman's rule, players may not use speed to quickly conceal information before their opponent has a chance to record it. Players are obliged to accurately answer any questions about information revealed during the current round of play. For example, player A's ice elemental was removed from the board this turn, and player A removed it before player B recorded the information. Before the next movement phase, if player B asks player A for a reminder of which piece was defeated, player A must answer. Once the next turn begins, players are no longer obligated to answer questions.

Victory Conditions

A player will win by either *defeating* or *isolating* his opponent's light/dark piece. Isolating the piece means defeating all other elementals on the board except for light/dark.