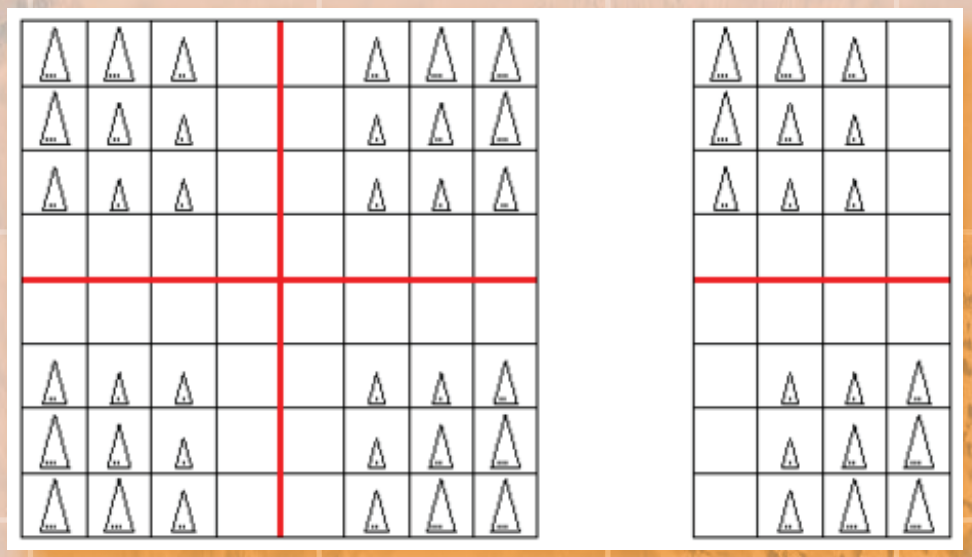
MARTIAN CHESS



FOUR-PLAYER AND TWO-PLAYER STARTING SETUPS:

INITIAL SETUP

Each player starts with nine pieces: three small (pawns), three medium (drones), and three large (queens). The color of the pieces is irrelevant to the gameplay. A mix of colors is recommended.
Players initially place their pieces in the corners of the board as shown. In a two-player game, only a half-board is used. The players decide who moves first. Play turns alternate, and pass to the left after each move.

MOVEMENT AND CAPTURING

The red lines in the diagrams indicate notional canals which divide the board into territories, or quadrant. At any given time a player controls only those pieces that are in his or her territory.
The pieces move as follows:

- Pawns move one space diagonally in any direction. (Unlike chess pawns, they may move backwards.)
- Workers move one or two spaces horizontally or vertically, without jumping. (Like chess rooks, but with limited range.)
- Drones move one, two, or three spaces any direction horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, without jumping. But can also make one single turn during its move. (For example up 1 over two, back two over one.) Making Drones very powerful pieces.
- Queens move any distance horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, without jumping. (The same as chess queens.)

As in chess, a square may contain no more than one piece, and a piece is captured when an enemy piece lands on the square it occupies. The capturing player removes the piece and puts it aside for later scoring. The hierarchy of the clan pieces size really doesn't matter, Queens can be captured by pawns. Hey its all out war, no safeties.
In the two-player game, a player may not immediately reverse an opponent's last move (i.e. may not move the piece across the canal back to its departure square, on the next turn).

END OF GAME AND SCORING

The game ends when one player runs out of pieces (i.e., their territory becomes empty). Players then compute their scores by adding up the point values of the pieces they captured: queen = 4, drone = 3, worker = 2, pawn = 1. The player or team with the highest total wins the game.
In the four-player game, the players form two teams, with teammates in opposite corners. Teammates play for a combined score. Aside from strategic differences, play is unaffected; it is legal (and sometimes good strategy) to capture your teammate's pieces.

STRATEGY

Capturing with a queen often allows the opponent to immediately recapture, leading to a back-and-forth battle until one player runs out of pieces in the line(s) of capture. This is more common in two-player games, since other players may interfere in the four-player version. The net point difference is usually minor with two players, but can give the players involved a significant lead over the others in a four-player game.
Moving a pawn or drone into enemy territory can be a good move for several reasons:

- it can prevent an opponent from capturing the piece from you
- it can ensure the availability of a piece to capture from an opponent
- it can block an attack from an enemy queen, drone, or worker.

VARIATION IN GAME PLAY:

When a playing piece is next to the queen it can't be captured.

UMBRAX

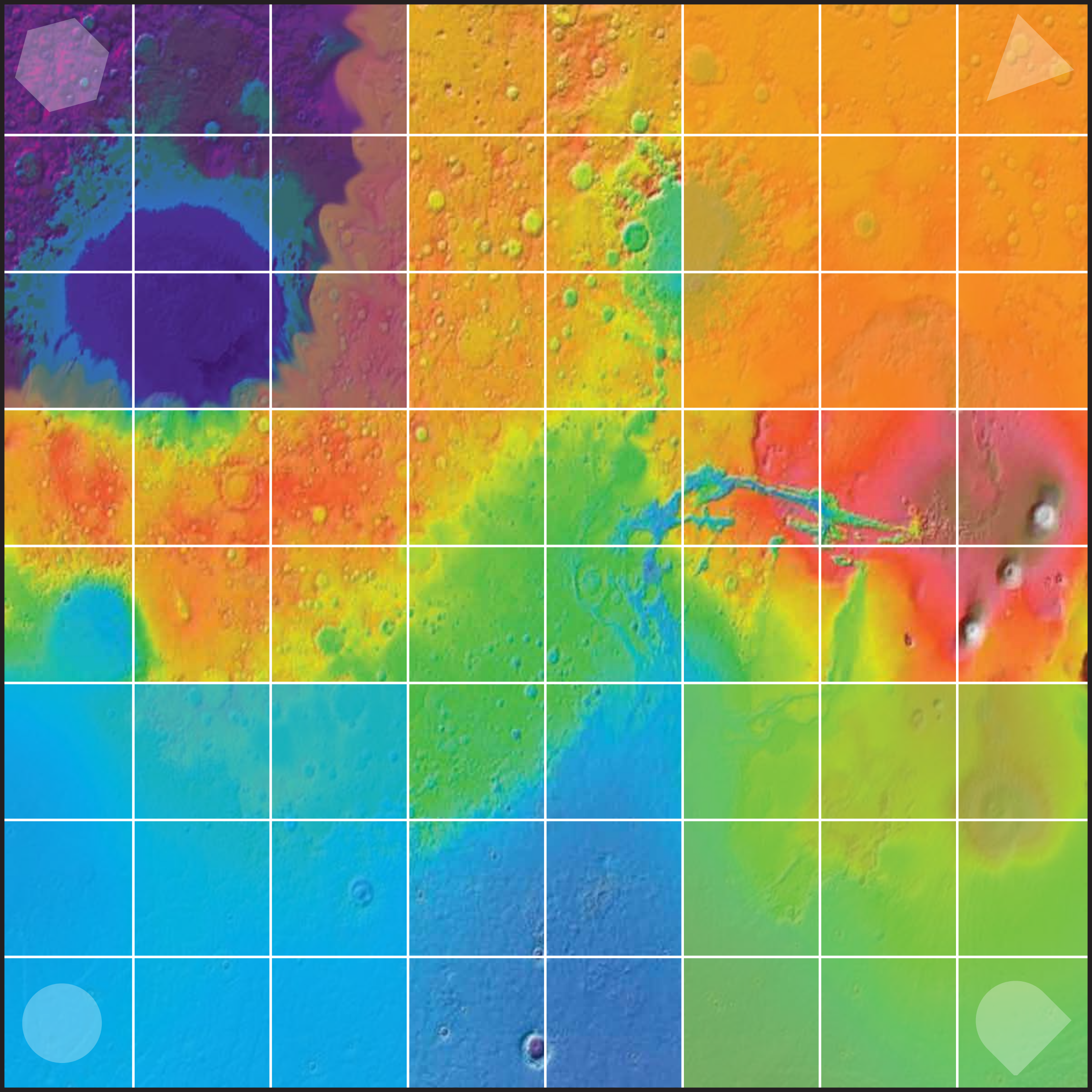
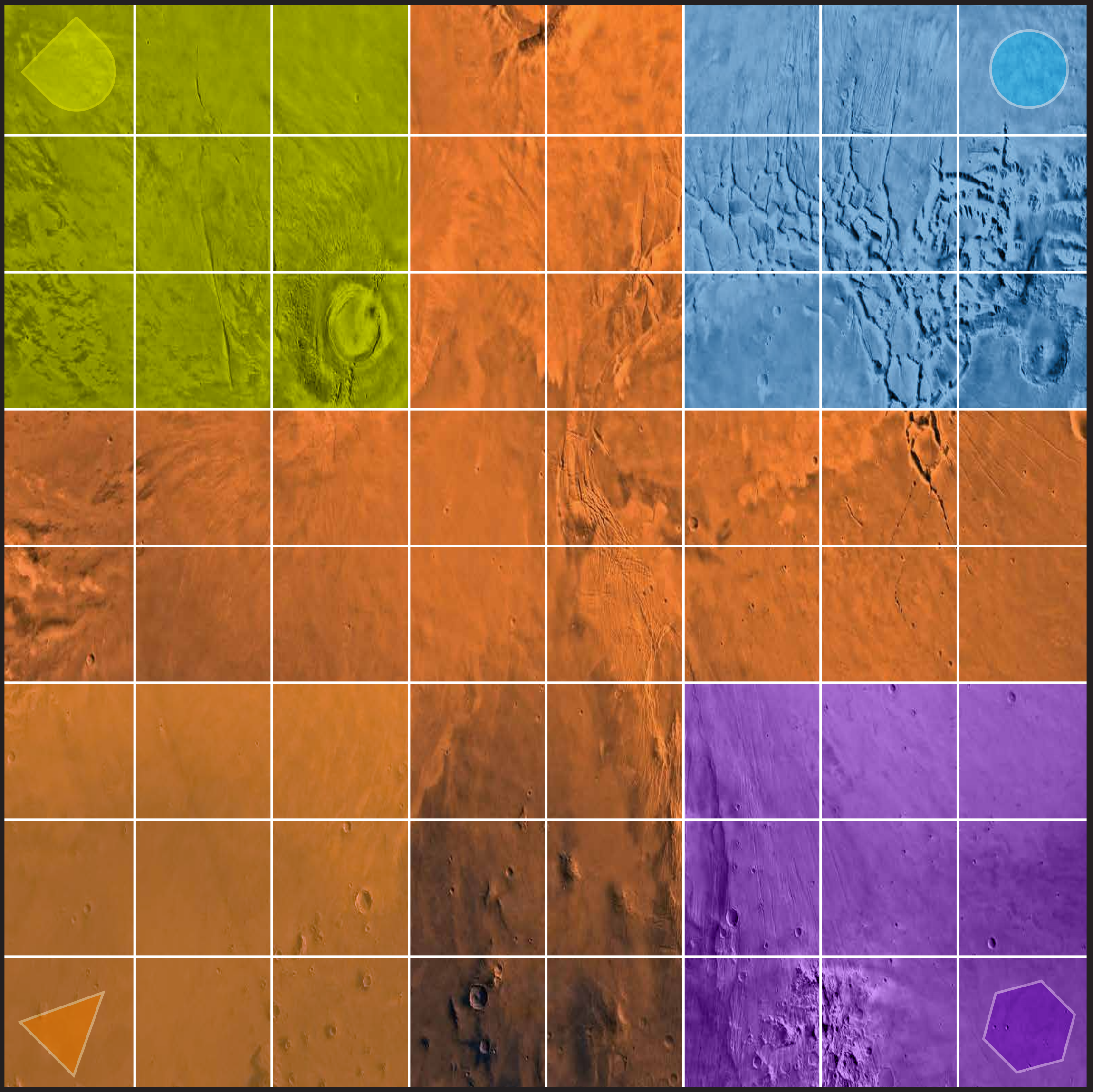
The Umbrax Clan were the underground dewllers of mars. Their social structure being similar to the other clans with a hive mentality. When mars natural resources started to wane, the moved underground to survive and avoid the deteriorating conditions above ground. Because of this they became extremely good engineers, mining the resources to trade with the other clans even if only to keep a fragile truce. They were more friendly with the Ambetz as they still both believed the planet needed saving from the other two clans. They felt the Oblisq and Hexatrons appeared to disregard the planets slow death.They've had tenuous relationship with the Hexatrons specifically because of they're superior technology and unwilling to share.

OBLISQ

The Oblisq Clan were the wealthy elites and ruling class on the planet. Superior in intellect but not willing to get their appendages dirty, believing it was beneath them. Masters and manipulating the other clans they attained most of their position by suppressing or taking advantage of what they consider the lesser of the species. They dispise the Umbrax, they distrust the Ambertz. And they only tolerate the Hexatrons mostly for their support in mainting their stations and control over the lesser clans. The Oblisq would literally self destruct if they didn't need to other clans in some form or the other. Its only by their own self worth do they manage to survive.

The Ambertz Clan were the laborers of Mars. They worked the planet and knew what would and wouldn't work. Being a simple culture in the respect of you get what you put into it attitude. Their existence became threatend when the Oblisq (the royal class of martians) tried to enslave them rahter than pay a fair price in sharing goods and duties on the planet. This was only aggrivated more by the Hexatrons constent push for technological improvements often at the determent of the other clans. The Oblisq monopolize the little available water that remains on the planet. The Ambertz clan are the most pragmatic of the 4 clans. They hope there will eventually be a truce or combined effort to save their world.

AMBERTZ

The Hexatrons Clan started out as a small fraction among the other Clans but quickly became a domineering force with their technology. They are almost robot like with their scienctific logic and unwillingness to yeild if it goes against their so called |technical code. They have a wavering alliance with the Oblisq clan. Primarily only because of their superior wealth and ability to help the Hexatrons to continue their research and improvements.
The Hexatrons however have no honor or empathy for their fellow martians. If it betters their clan or aligns with their technological dogma they will go out of their way to acheive their ultimate goal of superior force and advancement.

HEXATRON