

Hounds and Jackals

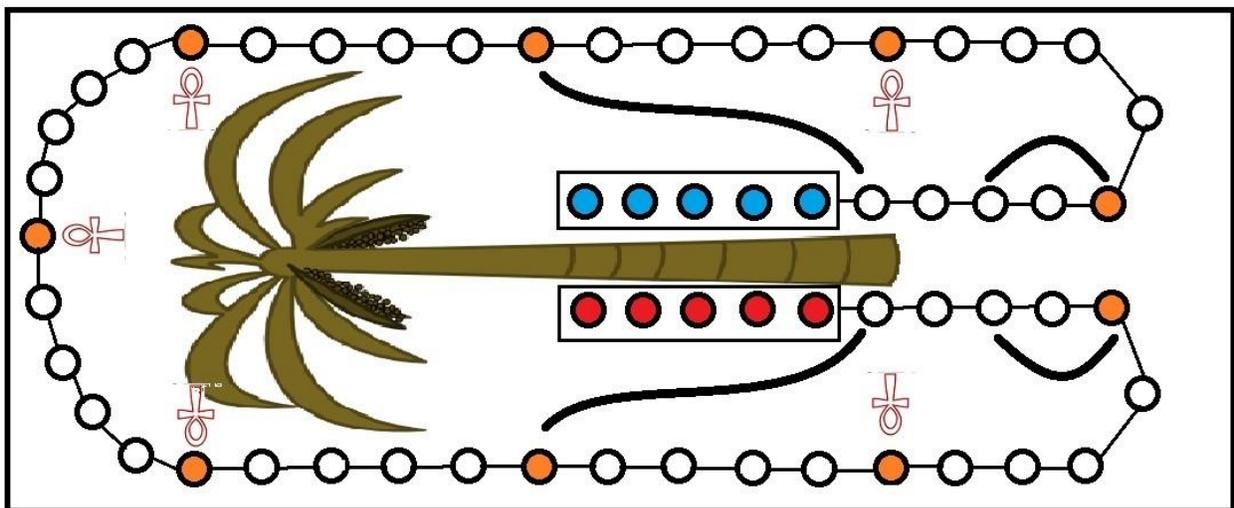
Game type: race

Pieces needed: five jackals, five hounds, two 4-sided die (6-sided are ok too)

Hounds and Jackals was a very popular board game in ancient Egypt. We have found many pictures of men and women playing it, from peasants and workers to the Pharaohs themselves. Many boards have been found by archeologists, ranging from crude clay tablets with holes in them found in common people's houses, to elaborate boards made of ivory and inlaid with gems found in the Pharaohs' tombs. The "men" are actually dogs: wild jackals and domesticated hounds. Typically the "men" are long sticks with either the hound or jackal head on the top.

Ironically, with all the pictures and boards discovered, we have never found any instructions on how to play it! I read everything I could about people's best guesses as to the instructions. Some were too simple, and some just didn't seem fun at all. I finally made up my own variant, which I think is the most fun. It is sort of a cross between backgammon (which is also an ancient game) and Chutes and Ladders.

The board looks like a big horseshoe with a palm tree in the center. There are 61 holes, with 10 of them on either side of the trunk.



For the ease of teaching, I am going to call the players Red and Blue instead of hounds and jackals. I put an orange dot for every 5th hole. Notice that some of the orange holes have an odd symbol by them. That is called an ankh (it rhymes with honk) and it is the Egyptian picture word for life. If you land one of

your men on an ankh space you get to go again. There is no limit of the number of ankhs you can land on in a turn. Also, being on an ankh means you are safe from being landed on by your opponent.

Now look at the curvy lines. These are snakes which are like the chutes in Chutes and Ladders. If you land on one end you have to ride it back to the other. Sometimes it will help you, sometimes it will set you back.

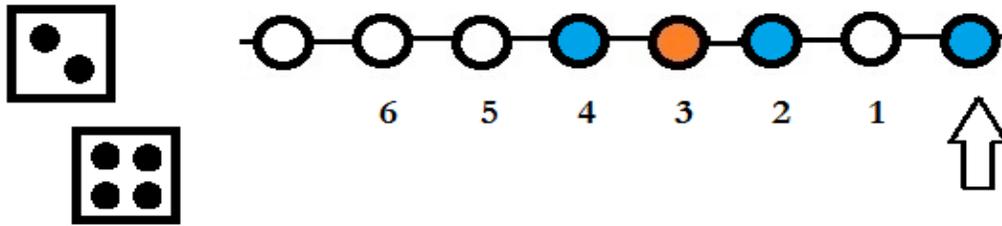
We begin with Blue placing her markers in the blue colored spaces (her home box), and Red putting his markers in his home box (the red spaces). The object is to get all 5 of your men all the way around the board and into your opponent's home box. If you know how to play backgammon, this will be easy as the rules are very similar.

You cannot land on a space that already has one of your men on it. You cannot land on your opponent if he is on a space with an ankh. If you land on your opponent's man that isn't on an ankh, his piece is removed and your piece now occupies the space. Also, you cannot land on a man that is in either of the home base boxes.

If your piece is removed by your opponent, you have to bring that piece back onto the board into your home box on an exact roll (on one die). You may not move any other men until your removed pieces are back on the board. If you are using 4-sided die (D4's) there is no 5, so if the two dice equal 5 you can come in in the fifth box. This is only true for the fifth box. 1 through 4 of the home box must be entered on an exact die. That is, a roll of 1 and 3 can bring you in on space 1 or 3 – not 4. If you cannot bring your man onto the box with the roll, you lose your turn. If it ever happens that all of the spaces on one side's home base are occupied and a man cannot be brought on, the person trying to get a man on loses the game.

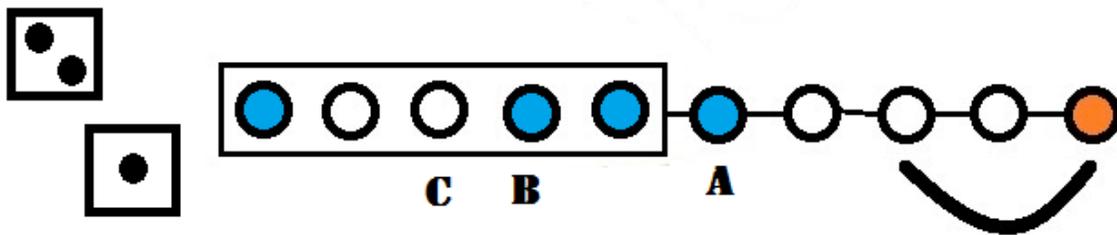
The ancient Egyptians used camel knucklebones marked with dots for dice. Since camel knucklebones aren't always available, I like to use two 4-sided dice, which are pyramid shaped (how appropriate!) and just a little different from the boring old six-sided die. You can get 4-sided dice in most hobby stores (not craft stores). You can use two 6-sided die if you like.

Blue rolls the two die. She can either move one man the total number of the roll, or she can move 2 men, one the amount on one die, and the other on the amount on the other die. Let's say she rolls a 2 and a 4. She can either roll one man 6 spaces ($4+2=6$) or she can move one man 2 spaces and another man 4 spaces. She can *not* move 2 men 3 spaces each, even though it would equal 6. The moves have to match each die. Also, if she moves just one man, she needs to be able to land it on each die's number first. Let me show you what I mean.



Blue wants to move her man marked by the arrow. She rolls a 6 (2+4). Even though space 6 is open, she cannot move that man there because space 2 (die 1) and space 4 (die 2) are blocked. Treat moving one man like 2 different men, stopping on the appropriate space for each die.

Men can only be moved forward. No backwards moves are allowed. Once you have a man in your opponent's home box, they cannot leave the box, but they can move forward within the box. Let me give you an example:



Blue wants to move her man A into her opponent's home box. She cannot enter him with a 1 or a 2 as both of those are blocked by her other men. However, she can move her man B one space into space C, and then she can move A 2 spaces to where B just was.

The first player to get all 5 of their men into their opponent's home box is the winner!