





studios
about this game

This is a traditional game from germanic and celtic cultures, common between the 5th and 12th centuries, and called "The Game of Vikings". It is now available to you as part of Ocastudios' collection of classic games. You can print it, fold it and take it with you wherever you go.

This is the "bronze" version of Ludus Classicus: Hnefatafl, in English. The game is under Public Domain, and under such license we release our version. It is distributed in PDF so as to be accessible to everyone. For more information, please visit www.ocastudios.com/rights.

History

There are many variations of “tafl” games in germanic and celtic traditions (the word tafl means simply “board”, but refers to a family of games). The size of the board vary in these games, along with the number of pieces, but the ratio of 2:1 pieces for attackers and defenders remains constant. Vikings have made this game popular in northern Europe, where it would be common from the 5th century until the 12th century, being then replaced by chess.

The exact rules of the game did not survive to the 21st century, but it can be fairly recreated with archeological findings and the numerous mentions to the game found in the Norse sagas. We know the game was played well into the 18th century by the Saami people of Lapland, and the most extensive explanation of the rules available to us come from an explorer named Linneus, that has observed them playing in 1732.

Since he did not speak the local language, though, his text is still ambiguous and flawed. Besides the asymmetry of the game (in classic games, players most often control the same number of pieces), another of its distinct features is the way pieces are captured – by sandwiching them among enemy pieces. This feature indicates the roman game Ludus Latrunculorum as a possible ancestor of tafl games. If this is true, then the ancient game of hnefatafl may have even older roots, because the roman game's roots go even deeper, tracing back to greek games that date at least to the 9th century BCE.

The best known variations of the hnefatafl are the alea evangelii, the tawlbwrdd, the brandubh, the ard ri and the tablut. A game called seega, probably related to tafl games via the roman ludus latrunculorum, is still played today in Egypt and Somalia.

For more information about the hnefatafl, visit <http://www.fetlar.org/hnefatafl-world-championship>. This site contains information about the Hnefatafl World Championship, held annually in Scotland.

Rules

To play Hnefatafl, one player will take the role of attacker, leading a group of 24 warriors on a mission to capture the enemy king. Another will take the role of the defender and, with only 12 warriors, must escort the king to safety.

SETTING UP

The attacker must place his pieces (those with swords) on the designated spaces on the edges of the board. The defender must place his pieces (those with shields) on the designated squares on the center of the board. His king, the piece with a singular shape, must be placed on the space on the very center of the board, on top of the crown.

THE GAME

The attacker is the first to move, and then they alternate turns. The goal of the attackers is to capture the enemy king (as explained below). The goal of the defenders is to lead their king to one of the refuge squares, in the corners of the board.

MOVING

All pieces, the king included, may move as many spaces as they wish, until they find an obstacle (be it another piece, a refuge square or the end of the board). Although all pieces may move across the central square, only the king may land there. The same thing is true about the refuge squares (the spaces on the corners of the board): only the king may land on those. If the king lands on any of the corner refuges, the game ends and the defender is the winner.

CAPTURING

When a piece is captured, it is immediately removed from the game. To capture an enemy piece it is necessary to sandwich it with two allied pieces, a move known as “the hammer and anvil”. It is not possible to capture if the allied pieces are not aligned vertically or horizontally, nor if they are aligned diagonally. A piece is also not captured if it itself have moved into the sandwiched square.

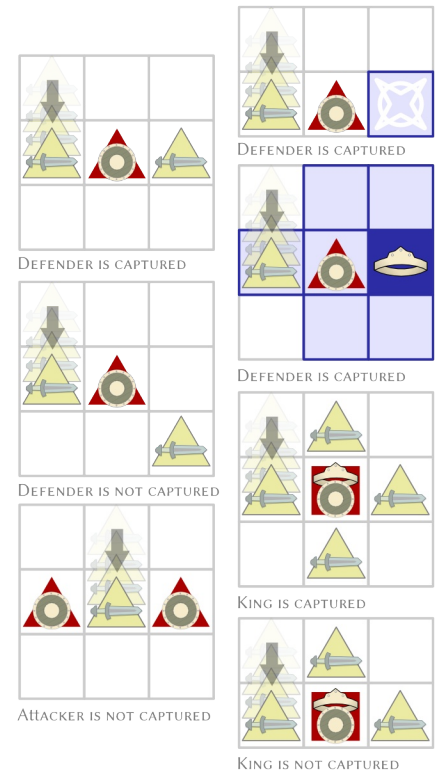
It is possible to capture an enemy piece by sandwiching it with an allied piece and a refuge square. It is also possible to do so by sandwiching it with an allied piece and the center square (where the crown is), but this will not work to capture a defender if the king is on that square.

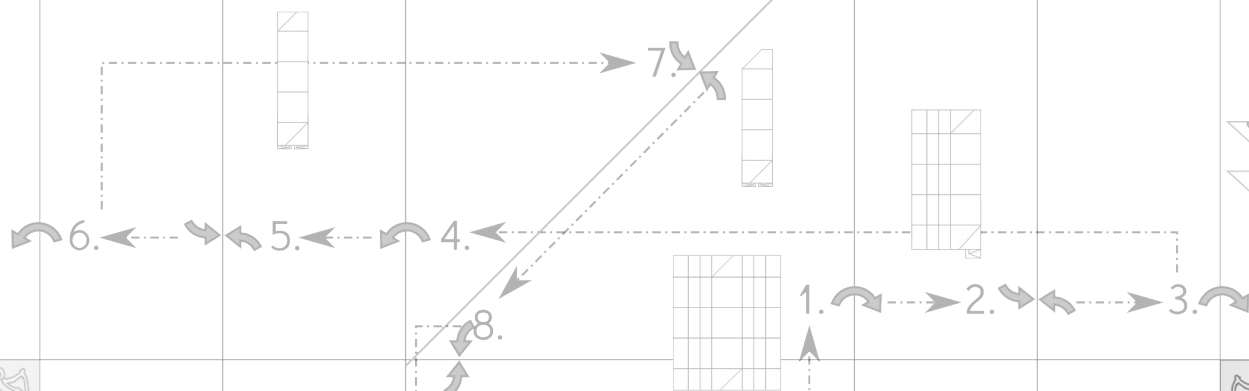
The above rules do not apply to the defending king. It can only be captured if it is surrounded by four attackers, one on each side (so it cannot be captured if it is on a square by the edge of the board). If the king is captured, the game ends and the attacker wins.

The king may also capture, and it is possible to capture up to three pieces with one move.

DRAW GAME

The game ends in a draw if the same exact positions are repeated by the same exact pieces thrice. It also ends in a draw if any player has no valid moves.





Start here

First you'll have to fold two sheets into modular pieces.

Once folded, it's time to assemble them into a box. To do it, follow the instructions below.

Instructions for assembling the box

I. Place the sheets as an X.



II. Fold up two sides next to each other.



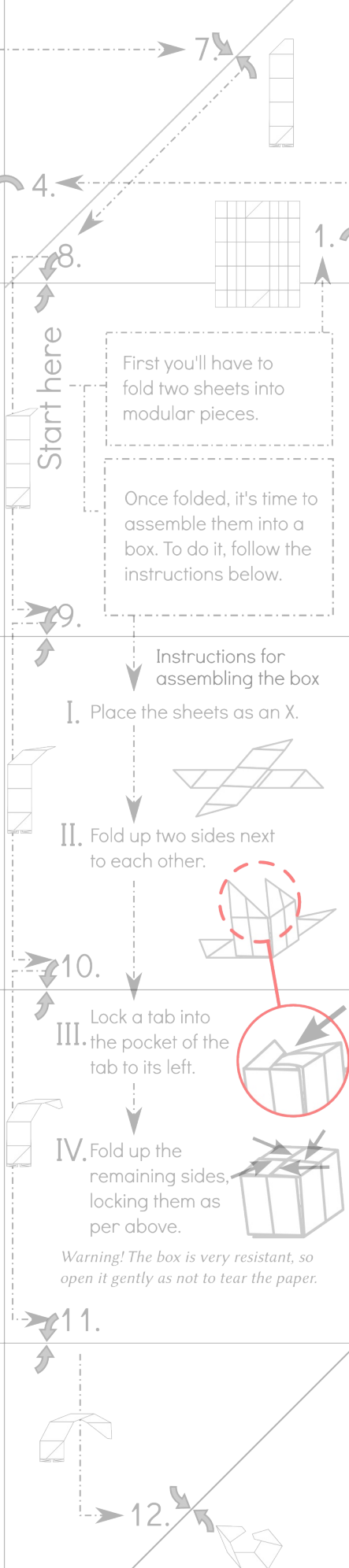
III. Lock a tab into the pocket of the tab to its left.



IV. Fold up the remaining sides, locking them as per above.

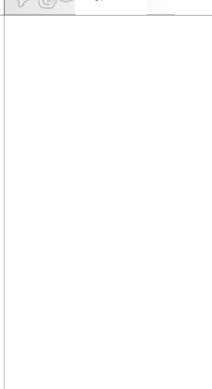


Warning! The box is very resistant, so open it gently as not to tear the paper.



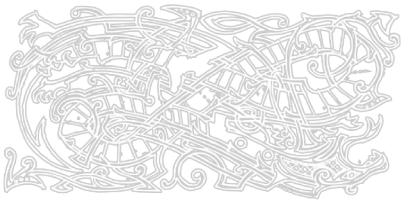
number of players	2+	ages	14+
duration of a match	1h	duration of assembly	50'

*IT TAKES 10' TO LEARN THE GAME. DURATIONS MAY VARY



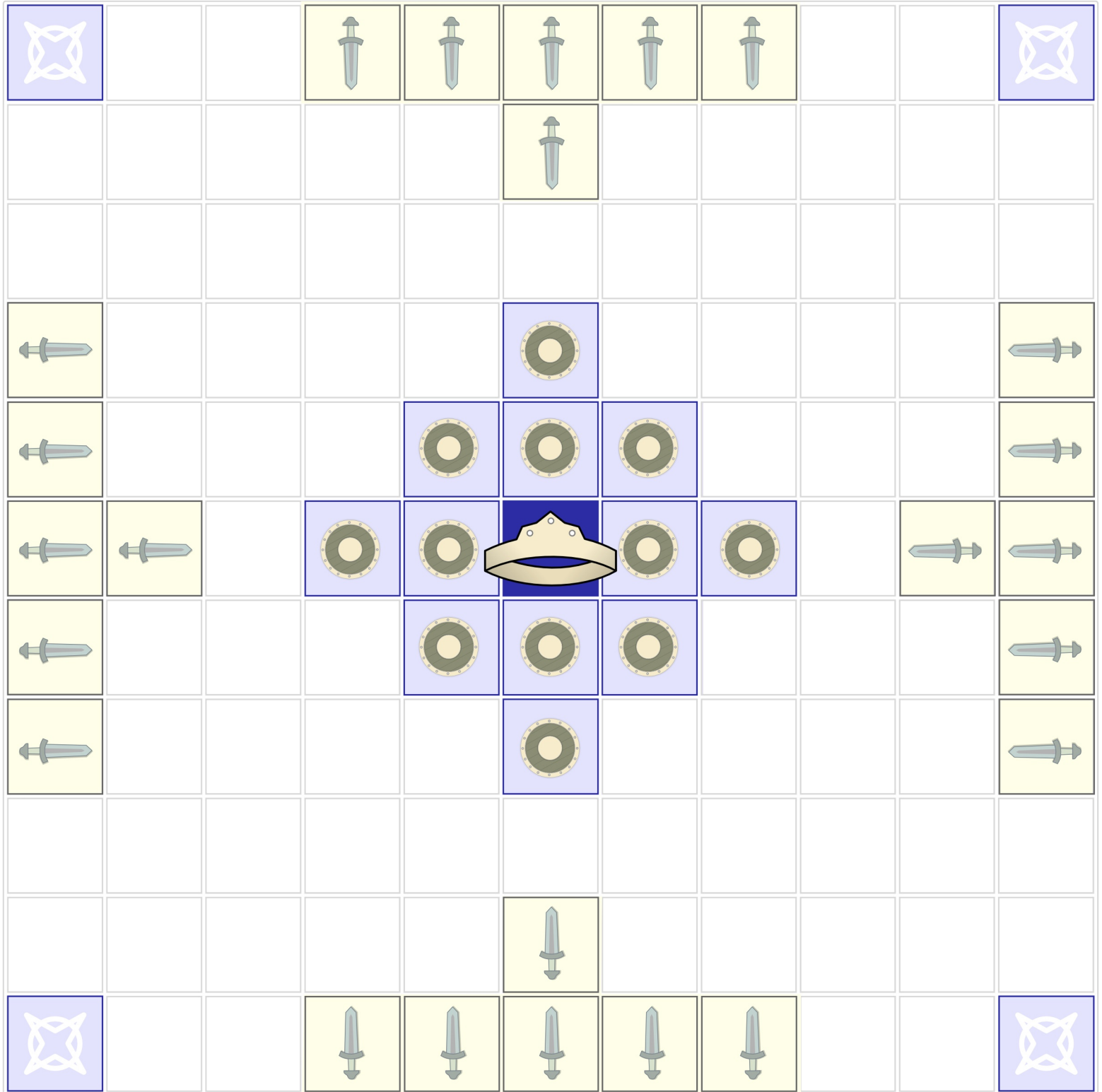
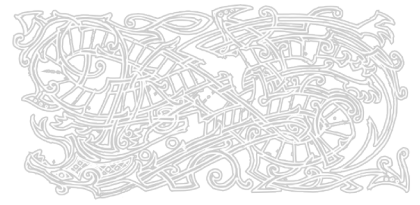
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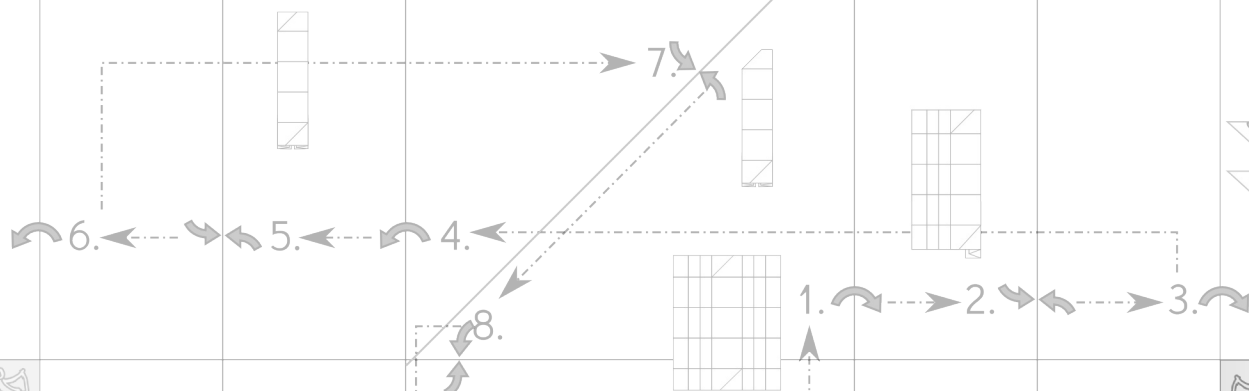
hnefatafl



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11.



12.



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duration of a match	1h	duration of assembly	50'

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Este jogo é parte de uma série de clássicos que estão sob domínio público. O design foi criado pela Ocasstudios, mas os regras são mantidas inalteradas sempre que possível.



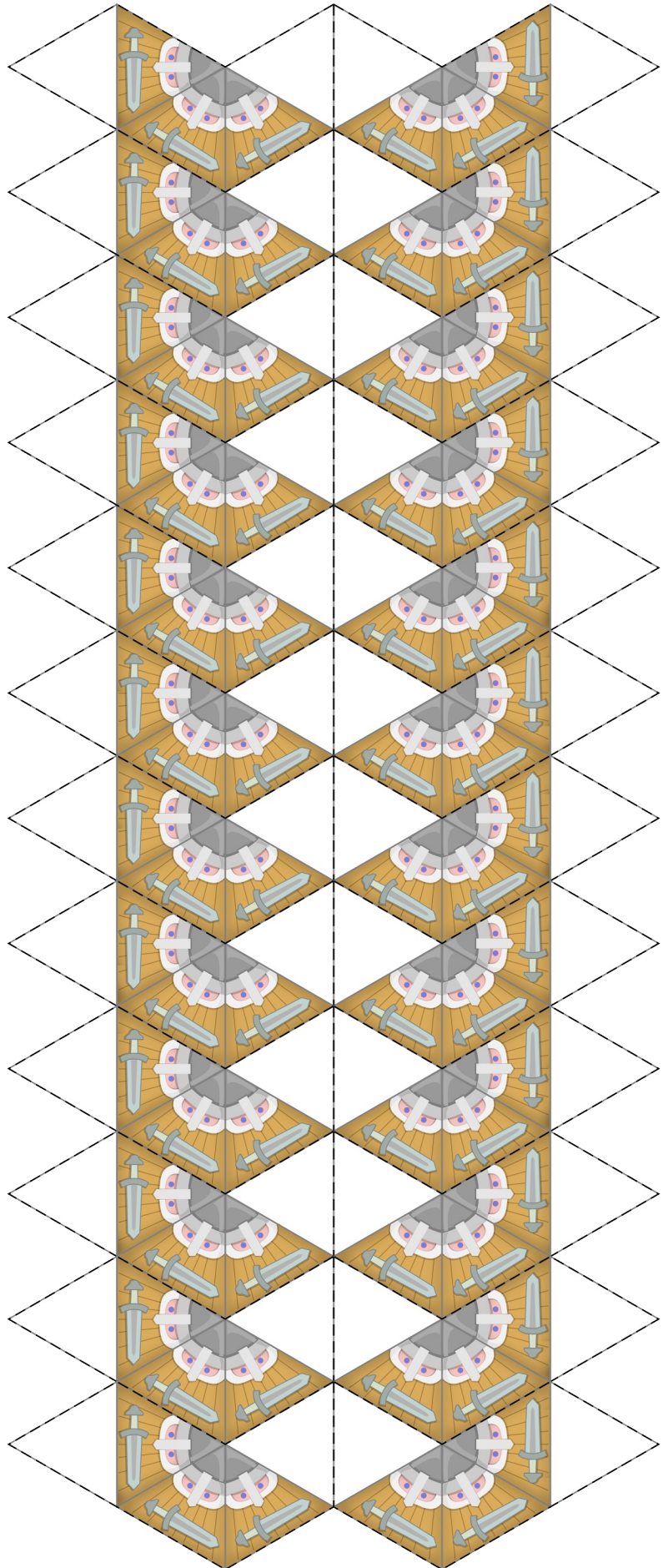
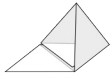
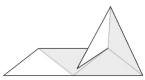
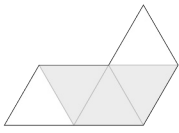
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