

Elemenders

A board game by Nick Robison

Intent

To provide players with a system that allows them to tactically adjust the terrain in ways that benefit their units in order to gain an advantage over the opponent.

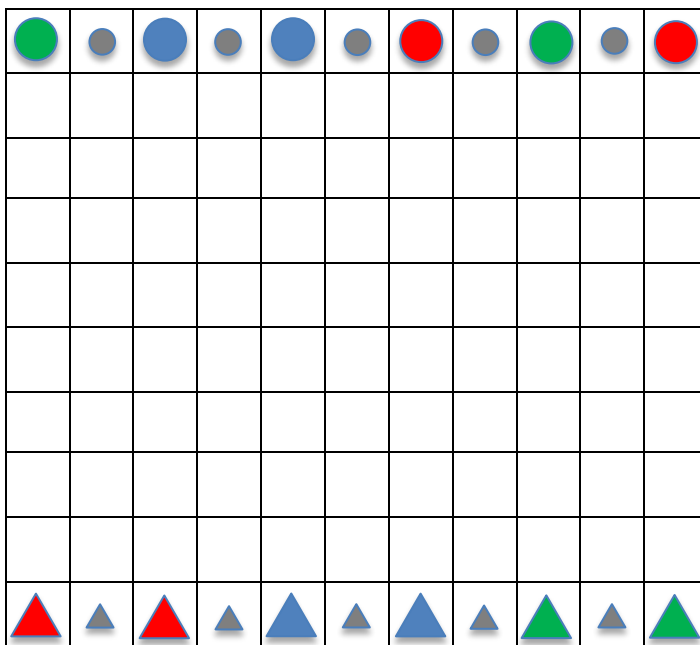
Game Overview

“Elemenders” is a two-player board game, where each player controls units of three elements: fire, water, and plant. Each of these units has the ability to terraform the ground around it, creating terrain that corresponds with its element (lava, river, and forest). These terrains have varying effects that can be positive or negative depending on the unit situated on it. It is up to the player to manage their units and strategically terraform the landscape to their advantage.

The objective of the game is for the player to send their units to the other side of the board and destroy the opposing player’s true monolith, while simultaneously defending their own.

Setup

The game is played on a board divided into a square grid that is 10 squares lengthwise and 11 squares widthwise. Each player starts with two pieces of each element (6 units total for each player) that can be placed on any tile along their end of the board, other than those occupied by a monolith. Each player has five monoliths, evenly placed on their end of the board.



An example of a setup board. While the monolith locations must always match this, players decide where to place their units between these monoliths.

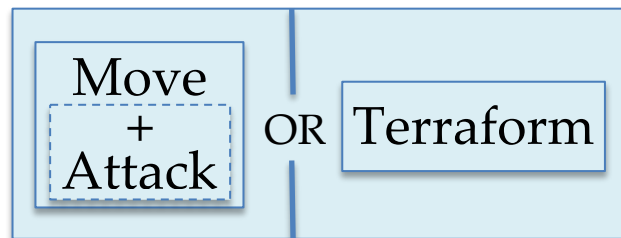
The players must flip a coin to determine who sets down a unit first. Players then alternate placing one unit at a time. This allows for both players to place their units without giving the other an unfair advantage.

Spawning

After every two turns (one turn for each player), a coin is flipped. If the result is heads, new units spawn. Both players get one elemental unit of their choice, and place it in any unoccupied space in their monolith row. If the result is tails, nothing happens and the game continues.

Actions

Every turn, players are given the opportunity to choose from three actions for each of their units: move and attack or terraform.



A unit can move and attack in the same turn, but movement must come first, as a unit's turn ends immediately after issuing an attack. If a player wants to terraform with a unit, it must not move or attack during that turn. A player may also choose to have a unit perform no action during their turn.

Movement

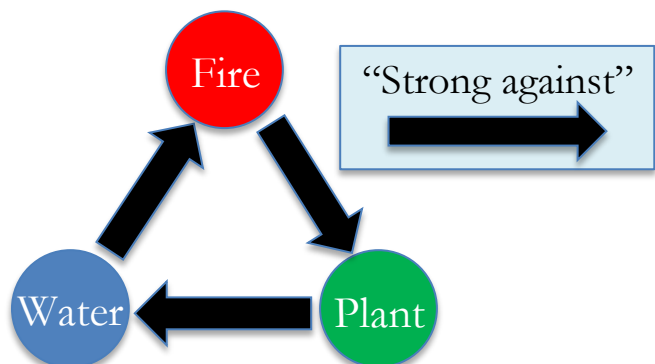
Each unit can move a set number of spaces vertically or horizontally along the board's 12x11 grid. Fire and water units can normally move up to two squares per turn, while plant units can normally move one square per turn. Monoliths are not considered normal units, and cannot move at all. Each player is allowed to move all of their units once every turn. Units can pass through tiles occupied by friendly units, but they cannot stop within the same tile. Enemy units, on the other hand, cannot be passed through.

Attacking

When a player's unit is adjacent to an enemy unit, the player can perform an attack. Every unit has two points of health, which is reduced by one when that unit is attacked. Fire and water units can never regain health after it is lost, but plant units are an exception (see plant section for details). After a unit has received two points of damage, it is destroyed and removed from the game.

Terraforming

Every elemental unit is able to terraform the tiles around it. In order to terraform, the unit must not move or attack during its turn. Tiles are terraformed permanently unless they are overwritten by a superior element. The three elements are balanced in the same way as rock-paper-scissors, with water beating fire, plant beating water, and fire beating plant. This only applies to terrain, as units gain no attacking bonuses or penalties regardless of element.



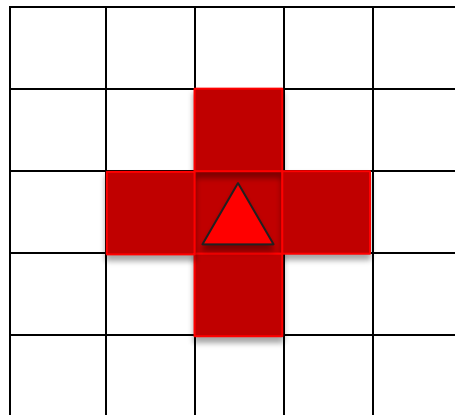
Units and Terrains

Fire Unit

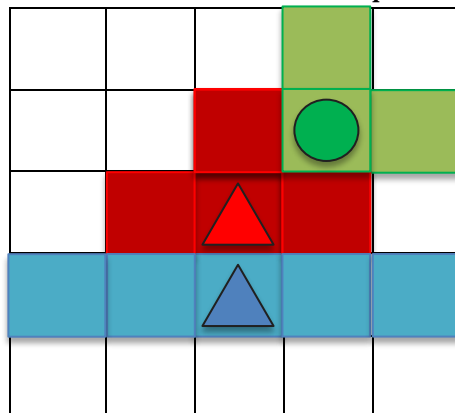
Fire units are the most offensive unit type. They can traverse two tiles per turn and can terraform lava.

Lava

Lava is a volatile, damaging terrain. When created, it covers five tiles around the unit in a cross pattern. Lava damages units for one point of damage if they end their turn on top of it. All fire units are immune to this damage.



Lava tiles overwrite forest tiles, but cannot expand through river tiles.



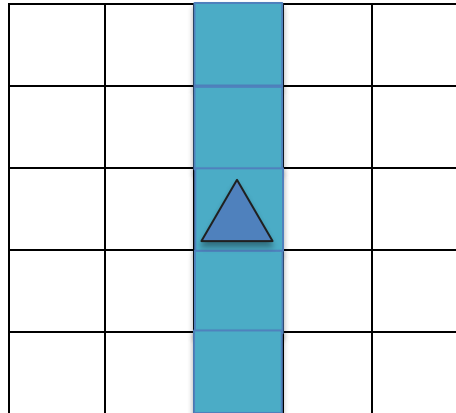
Water Unit

Water units specialize in mobility. They can normally move two tiles per turn and can terraform rivers.

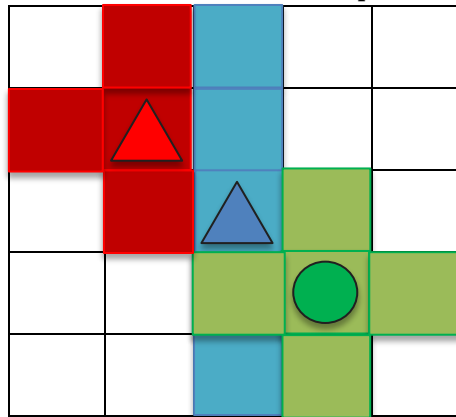
Rivers

A river is a type of terrain that allows for rapid travel across the game board. When created, it covers five tiles in a line in front and behind the unit. When terraforming a

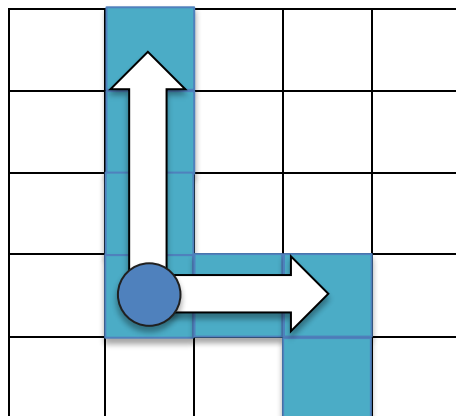
river, the player can decide whether to create it going vertically or horizontally. A river damages fire units for one point of damage if they end their turn on top of it.



River tiles overwrite lava tiles, but cannot expand through forest tiles.



Rivers also allow water units to instantly travel all the way down one lane of river tiles. When traversing over a river, a water unit can use just one movement to travel vertically or horizontally over connected river tiles. The player can choose to have the unit travel along the entire stretch of water tiles, or stop the unit earlier if desired. If an enemy unit blocks part of the river, it will act as an obstacle that cannot be passed through.

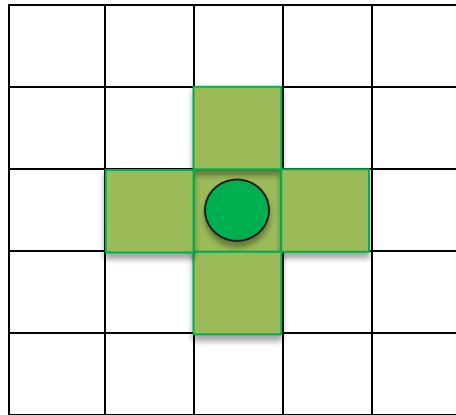


Plant Unit

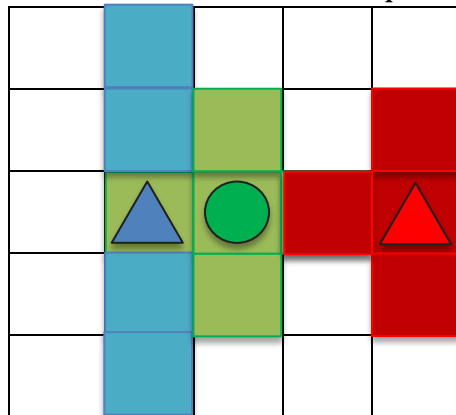
Plant units have the highest defensive capabilities of any unit. They normally can move only one tile per turn and can terraform forest terrain.

Forests

Forest is a necessary sanctuary for plant units. When created, it covers five tiles around the unit in a cross pattern. A plant unit is actually able to move two tiles per turn, so long as both of those moves are on forest tiles. Additionally, when a plant unit ends its turn on a forest tile, it is healed back to full health. Forests have no detrimental or beneficial effects on other units.



Forest tiles overwrite water tiles, but cannot expand through lava tiles.



Monoliths and Winning the Game

Monoliths are a very different kind of “unit.” They have set placement, cannot move, cannot attack, and are unaffected by terrain. There are two types of monoliths: four decoy monoliths and one true monolith. At the start of the game, players can choose which of their five monoliths is their true monolith (denoted by a mark on the bottom of the piece), unbeknownst to the opponent. Both types can be attacked normally by enemy units, but decoy monoliths have only one health, while a true monolith has two. Nothing in particular happens when a decoy monolith is destroyed, but the game ends when a

true monolith is destroyed, granting victory of the game to the opposing player that destroyed it.