

The Shield of Achilles

A solo Roll&Write game by Dániel Ballabás

Playtime: around 30 minutes

Achilles prepares to avenge his friend Patroclus on the field of Troy, and his mother, the goddess Thetis ask the help of Hephaestus (you), blacksmith of the gods to create a new shield for him. During the course of the game, you will craft the famous shield depicting scenes of ancient greek life.

Components:

3*D12

4 markers (small cubes for example)

1 pen/pencil

1 player sheet

Setup:

Place every component on the table in front of you.

Place the markers next to the player sheet, you will only use them after the first turn.

Gameplay:

Your objective is to score more points by crafting the shield than the points on your discarded dice by the end of the game. These discarded dice values represent the scrap metal that Apollo steals away from you to create arrows for Paris, who is destined to kill Achilles.

Start each turn by rolling the 3 D12 dice. On every turn, you must decide which die you'll place in the Forge, to determine the metal you will be using; which die you'll place onto the Anvil, to represent the shield circle you will craft into; and which die to leave aside, which Apollo will steal to make arrows for Paris.

Forge - Metals:

Pick one of the rolled dice to determine the used metal. Based on the rolled value, you can draw symbols representing one of the four available metals into the small empty circles in sections of the shield.

- 1-3 die value: Gold - draw 2+2 symbols in two adjacent shield sections
- 4-6 die value: Silver - draw 2 symbols in one shield section
- 7-9 die value: Copper - draw 1+1 symbols in two adjacent shield sections
- 10-12 die value: Tin - draw 1 symbol in one shield section



Sections in other circles of the shield are also considered adjacent. For example, the "City - Ambush" section is adjacent to the following sections: both Cosmos sections, City - Marriage and Trial of Law sections, and Rural - Wheat reaped, Lions attack cattle and Dance of Youth sections.

You cannot draw more than 5 symbols in a shield section, so for example, if you already have 4 symbols in a section, you can only draw 1 Gold or Silver symbols, the second symbol will be lost. Or you can try to use another metal there. When choosing the first section, you must pick a section with at least 1 empty circle in it.

Anvil - Shield Circle:

The second die you pick will be used to determine which shield circle you can start the drawing of metal symbols into. It's up to you to decide which section(s) to draw into after determining the shield circle.

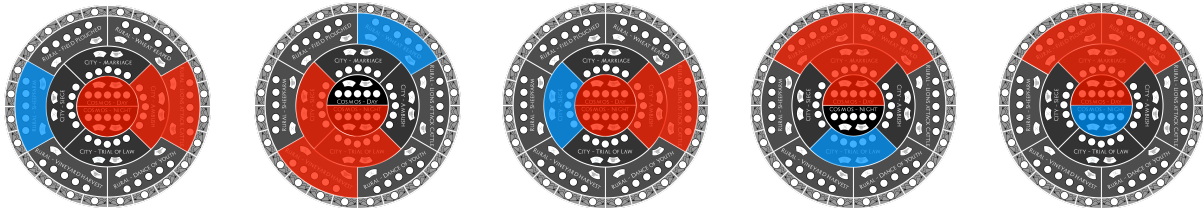


- 1-4 die value: Rural - you must start in a section of the Rural circle of the shield (with 6 sections)
- 5-8 die value: City - you must start in a section of the City circle of the shield (with 4 sections)
- 9-12 die value: Cosmos - you must start in a section of the Cosmos circle of the shield (with 2 sections)

Hephaestus's lame leg:

Since Hephaestus's legs are broken after his long fall from Olympus to Earth, there is a limit to what he(you) can reach from one turn to the next. After finishing the first turn, place the markers into the sections opposite to the section you drew into. If you draw in two sections (using Gold and Copper), the first section you drew into counts.

The sections covered by markers will be unavailable to you in the next turn. See examples of what gets blocked (blue: first section drawn into, red: blocked next turn):



Impressing Athena

If you are not happy with your dice results, you have a limited option to change the value of the dice you use for Metal and Circle selection, by sliding the dice to the next value in either a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction in the smaller circles above the shield. For example, with a clockwise movement, you can change a City Circle into a Rural Circle value, or a Tin Metal into Copper.

However, each time you do this, Athena, another goddess who values excellent craftsmanship, will be less and less impressed by your work, and you have to cross out one of the boxes under the shield. You will also lose 4 points from your endgame score with each crossed-out boxes, and if you run out of boxes, you will no longer be able to do this action.

Apollo's arrows:

The third die, unused in forging will be stolen by Apollo, who favours the Trojan side in the war, especially the young prince Paris. You will use the actual value rolled on the die, these represent hit points of arrows Apollo creates for Paris. Write each number in one of the small circles in the outer layer of the shield. This also helps in keeping track of each turn.

End of the game

The game lasts for 24 turns. In the end, you score the shield you have crafted based on 4 criteria, and score the arrows of Apollo based on 2 criteria. You win the game if the score of the shield is higher than the score of the arrows.

Scoring

The shield



- **The thickness of the shield:**

The shield was described as 5 layers thick in the Iliad by Homer. Each small circle in the sections represent one layer. A shield section with 3 layers or less is too weak and is worth nothing. Score 4 points if a section has 4 layers, and score 7 points for a complete section with 5 layers.

1-3	◇ PT
4	4 PT
5	7 PT

You can mark each section's points in this field: , then summarize the results in the tables in the lower part of the sheet.

- **The strength of the shield:**

Combining different materials in each section will also make the shield stronger. Score 1 point if you have only 1 type of metal in the section, score 3 points for 2 types of metal, 5 points for 3 types and 7 points if you have a metal of each of the 4 types in a section.

1	1 PT
2	3 PT
3	5 PT
4	7 PT

You can mark each section's points in this field: , then summarize the results in the tables in the lower part of the sheet.



- **Bonus for finishing the artwork:**

The shield of Achilles wasn't just an instrument of war, it was also a thing of beauty. Score 6 points for each circle that has all of its sections complete.



- **Extra points if Athena is impressed:**

Athena will reward you if you can impress her, and what she values most is wisdom for optimizing the dice selection. Score 4 points for each of the boxes that were not crossed out during the crafting process.



Apollo's arrows

- **Arrow Hit point values:**

Add up the values of the arrows written in the 24 circles in the outer layer of the shield.



- **Extra points if Ares is impressed:**

Setting aside too many of the same type of arrows (ie. too many 1s or 2s), will draw the attention of the gods of Olympus, and they will interfere. Ares, god of war, who is also supporting the Trojan side, will add extra hit points to the arrows if they are of the same value. Mark a notch for each occurrence of a number to make counting this easier.



1-2	◇ PT	5	7 PT
3	1 PT	6	1◇PT
4	4 PT	6+	15PT

Use the Σ areas for summarizing the two columns.