

KELTIS

Way of Stones

by Reiner Knizia
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For 2-4 players, age 10+

This translation (v.1) by Steve McKeogh

Idea and Aim

The players use numbered cards to move their figures as far as they can along the paths of stone. On each path the players have to choose whether to play their cards in ascending or descending value. At the end of the game the number of points you score will depend upon how far your figures have advanced along the paths. You also need to collect Celtic wishing stones that can be found along the way as these will give you extra points. But if you do not collect enough of them, you will lose points. The winner is the player who has the most points at the end of the game.

Contents

1 board
110 cards (two cards of each value 0 to 10 in each of 5 colours)
20 figures (1 large figure and 4 small figures in each of the 4 player colours)
4 large clover leaves
4 score markers
25 path tiles: 9 wishing stones, 9 clover leaves, 7 number tiles (2 x '1'; 3 x '2'; 2 x '3')

Preparation

- Before the first game carefully punch out all the tiles from the frames.
- Each player takes the pieces of one colour: the 4 small figures, the 1 large figure, a score marker and a large clover leaf. With less than four players, the unused pieces stay in the box.
- Place the figures on the board, on the large stone (the starting space) at the beginning of the stone paths.
- Put the score markers beside space 1 of the score track.
- So that everyone knows everybody's colour, each player lays his clover leaf in front of him.
- Shuffle the 25 path tiles and place one, face-down, on each of the dark stones. Also place one on each of the large stones at the end of each path. Then turn all of the tiles face up.
- Shuffle the cards. Deal a starting hand of **8 cards** to each player. The other cards are placed as a face-down draw-pile next to the board.

Note: If there are only 2 players, take 30 cards from the deck and return them, face-down, to the box.

The Board

There are five different stone paths on the board. All the paths begin at the large starting stone and each leads to an end stone of its colour. There are numbers alongside the paths showing how many points a figure will score if it is in that row at the end of the game. Figures in the first three rows (minus area) will lose points; from the fourth row onwards the points are positive.

The final three rows are the goal area (row values: 6, 7 and 10). The game ends when a total of five figures have reached the goal area of the board.

The arrangement of tiles on the dark stones is different every game, and so the stone paths will always provide different opportunities. In the lower right corner of the board is a table showing the points that will be scored for collecting wishing stones.

Around the edge of the board is a score track for recording points gained during the game from the path-tiles that have numbers on them. Players receive most of their points from scoring at the end of the game.

Playing the game

Whoever last visited Ireland starts the game. Failing that, the oldest player begins. Turns are then taken in clockwise order. On your turn, you must play **one** card and then draw **one** card.

1. PLAY ONE CARD. You play **one** card from your hand, which can be done in either of two ways:

a) You discard the card unused, placing it face-up alongside the board (best done next to one of the two shorter sides). Make a separate discard pile for each of the five colours.

or

b) You lay the card face-up in front of you. If this is the first card placed in front of you for that path, move one of your figures on to the first stone of that path (row value: -4). If you already have cards for this path in front of you, lay the new card slightly below the last one, so that the values of all the cards remain visible. You then advance your figure by one stone on the path.

Note: For each colour, you form **one** column of cards.

The cards can be laid out in one of two ways:

- **Either** starting with a **low** value: Then each subsequent card of this colour that you lay out must be of the **same value or higher** than the last card you laid out in this colour.

Example: You could place a 3, then another 3, then a 6, then a 7, then another 7, and so on.

- **Or** you start with a **high** value: Then each subsequent card of this colour that you lay out must be of the **same value or lower** than the last card you laid out in this colour.

Example: You could place a 9, then an 8, then another 8, then a 5, then a 3, and so on.

As soon as you lay out a card of a second value in a colour you commit yourself to laying out **all** your cards of **this colour** in an ascending or descending order.

Note: Late in the game, if a player lays out a card for a path on which his figure has already reached the end stone (row value: 10) he may instead advance any one of his other figures by one stone.

The path tiles

The result of a figure moving on to a stone that has a path tile on it depends upon the type of tile that is there:

Number tile: You advance your score marker the corresponding number of points on the score track. The tile remains face-up where it is.

Clover leaf: You advance any one of your figures by one stone. This can also be the one that you have just moved. The tile remains face-up where it is. If the figure you move lands on another tile then the effects of that tile are also carried out, and so on.

Wishing stone: You take the tile and place it face-up in front of you.

2. DRAW ONE CARD. After discarding or laying out a card, you draw **one** new card in order to again bring your hand back up to eight cards.

You may take either the top card of the face-down draw-pile **or** the top card from one of the face-up discard piles next to the board.

It is then the next player's turn and the game continues in this way.

End of the game

The game ends as soon as the **fifth figure**, in total, reaches the goal area (the final three rows) regardless of which paths they are on. If the fifth figure lands on a tile in entering the goal area, the action of this tile is **not** carried out.

It does not matter what colours the five figures are made up of.

The game also ends if the last card is drawn from the face-down draw-pile.

Scoring

Each figure on a path scores the points indicated alongside it. The large figure scores double the points. The points are recorded on the score track. If a player scores over 50 points, his score marker simply begins again at the 1 and 50 is added to the result.

If a figure is alongside a negative number, the player must move his score marker back that number of points. If this applies to a large figure then the points lost are doubled. Figures still on the starting space score nothing.

The players then score points for the number of wishing stones they have each collected, and they move their score markers forward or backward according to the table.

Number	→	Points
0		-4
1		-3
2		2
3		3
4		6

5 or more

10

The winner is the player who has now scored the most points. If there is a tie then there is more than one winner.