

# ARMY ANTS



## A 2-player board game using a standard deck of playing cards

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The Red Ants and Black Ants are at war! Each side marches from their respective anthills, ready to do battle. The mission: capture the opposing Queen! *Army Ants* is a simple game that can be remarkably deep. Setup is easy and play is fast, with most games lasting about 20 minutes.

## EQUIPMENT AND SETUP

You need a standard deck of playing cards.

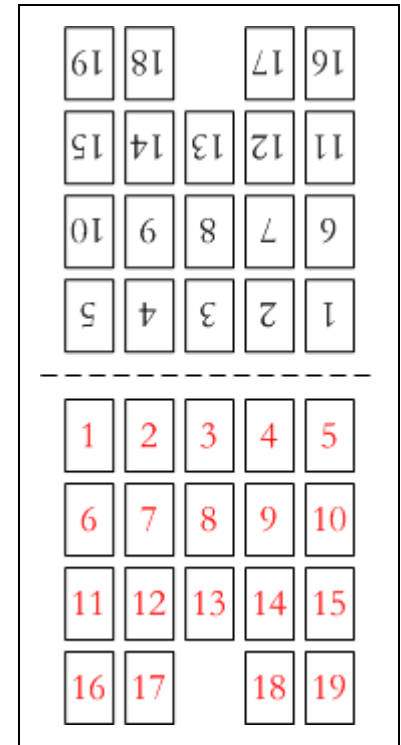
Remove all the Tens, Jacks and Kings, as well as one red Queen and one black Queen. Then separate the remaining cards into a red pile (the Red Army Ants) and a black pile (the Black Army Ants). Each player takes one pile.

The numbered cards represent groups of army ants, one ant per spot. The Queen represents the leader of each army. Card suits have no effect, only numbers and colors. Diamonds and Hearts are the Red Army, Spades and Clubs are the Black Army.

Each player shuffles his respective deck and deals his cards face-up in the pattern indicated in the image to the right. The dashed line represents the center of the table. Each player places his first card face-up on the "1" position, his second on the "2" position, and so forth until all 19 cards are dealt.

Note the empty space in the center of the last row of each side.

You are now ready to play. The aggressive Red Ants take the first turn.



## RALLY YOUR TROOPS







Before the battle begins, the players spend the first five turns of the game rallying their troops, alternately shifting their armies to better position their side for battle. Starting with the red player, each player may take one **March!** or **Swap!** command (see below). Once each player has taken five turns, the Battle begins as indicated below. Note that no player may move cards into enemy territory during this time, and no player may perform an **Attack!** command (see below).

### *The Queen's Favor*

If your Queen is dealt into the first row (positions 1 through 5) of your army, you may skip your *entire* Rally Troops phase and simply move your Queen to the empty space in your back row. You may not perform any other actions, and your opponent performs his remaining turns at once.

**This is optional** - you may still choose the 5 turns even if your Queen is dealt into the front row.

**Example: Red Army's Rally Troops Phase** (note, Black's turns are not shown)

		
1: Red player moves card 18 left into the empty space.	2: Red moves cards 9 and 14 downward.	3: Red moves cards 6, 7 and 8 to the right.
		
4: Red moves card 1 downward.	5: Red moves cards 2, 3 and 4 to the left.	The Red Army after the Rally Troops phase.

## BATTLE!

Once the Rally Your Troops phase is complete, the battle begins! Starting with the Red player, players take turns performing one of four commands with their army ants. Once a player has resolved a command, the other player performs a command, and so on until until one Queen is captured, ending the game. Note that you may only perform commands with your own cards, never your opponent's cards. The commands a player may take are:

- March!
- Move Out!
- Swap!
- Attack!

## MARCH!

When you perform a March! command, you take **one or more** of your cards and slide them one or more open spaces horizontally or vertically. Note that the "Rally Your Troops" example above features all March! commands. The following rules are in place when Marching:

1. If you move one card, you may move it any number of spaces horizontally or vertically along empty spaces (but see the Move Out! command below).
2. You may not jump over any other cards. All movement must be through and into empty spaces.
3. If you move more than one card, all cards must be in a single horizontal or vertical line and connected with no spaces in between.
4. You may move the cards any number of spaces horizontally or vertically, even into enemy territory. The cards you move must only move in a straight line. They **may not** move diagonally.
5. You are allowed to move your cards "backwards" toward you.
6. The cards must all move the same distance horizontally or vertically. You may not break up the line.
7. The cards you move **may NOT** turn corners.
8. Your Queen may be part of a March! Command

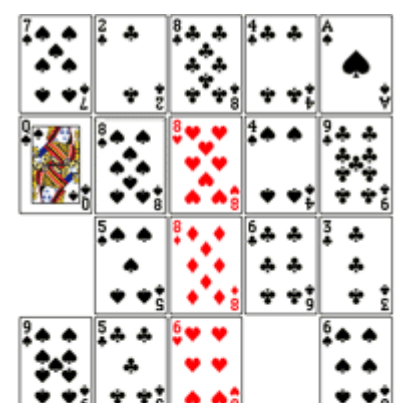
### March! Example #1

The Black player performs a March! command, moving a line of three cards to the left. (The Red side of the board is not displayed). Note that the 4 of Spades may not move any farther, because it is attached to the two 9's during this March! order.



### March! Example #2

The Red player Marches his middle column of four red cards three spaces forward. Note that he did not have to move his entire column. He could, for example, have moved the two 8's forward while leaving the 6 and 4 behind. Had the Red player wanted to March! the 8 of Hearts and 2 of Diamonds, he would only be able to move one step forward, as the 6 of Clubs prevented the line from moving farther.



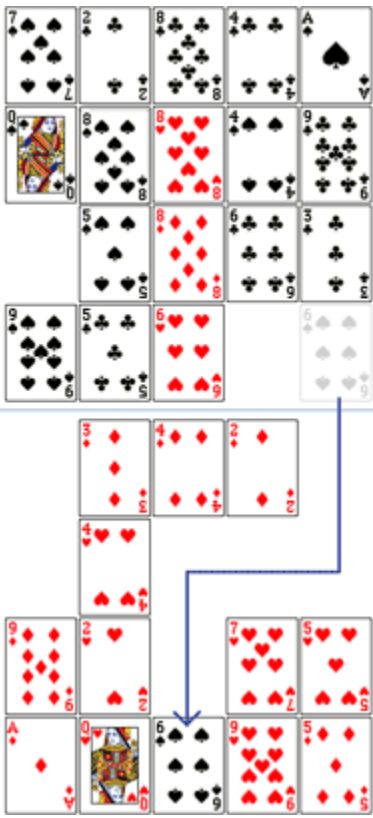
### MOVE OUT!

When you perform a Move Out! command, you take **one** of your cards and physically slide it one or more open spaces horizontally and/or vertically as many spaces as you'd like. The following rules are in place when Moving Out:

1. You may move one card any number of spaces horizontally and/or vertically, even into enemy territory.
2. The card you move must only move in straight lines. It may not move diagonally.
3. You are allowed to move your cards "backwards" toward you.
4. You may not jump over any other cards. All movement must be through and into empty spaces.
5. Your card **may** turn corners. In fact, the Move Out! command is the only one in which a card may turn corners, and it is limited to a single card.
6. You may command your Queen to Move Out!

Although technically a March! command, moving a single card in a straight line without turning can also be considered a Move Out! command.

### Move Out! Example



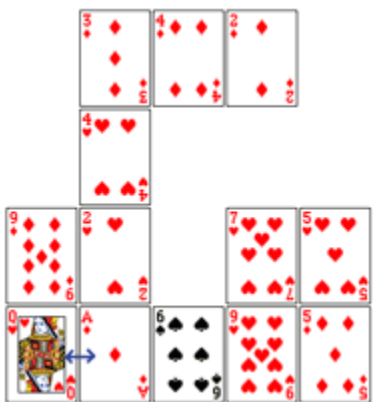
Continuing the second example above, the Black player performs a Move Out! command, moving his 6 of Spades into enemy territory to threaten the opposing Queen.

### SWAP!

When you perform a Swap! command, you have **one** of your cards trade places with **one** of its adjacent friendly cards. The following rules are in place when Swapping:

1. The swapped cards must be adjacent horizontally or vertically, with no spaces in between.
2. You may not swap cards diagonally.
3. Your Queen may be part of a Swap! command.

### Swap! Example



We continue from the Move Out! example above. The Red player's Queen is threatened by the Black player's 6, so Red spends his turn by Swapping his Queen with the adjacent Ace, protecting the Queen. (The Black side of the board is not displayed).

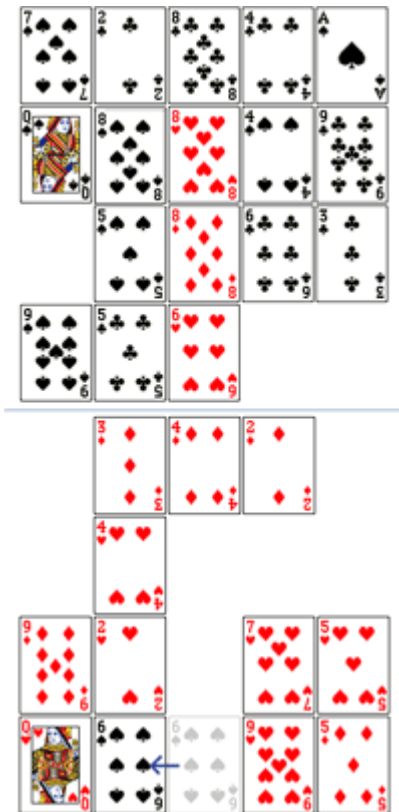
## ATTACK!

When you perform an Attack! command, you attack **one** enemy card with **one** of your cards. Multiple cards may never attack or be attacked. The following rules are in place when Attacking:

1. You may move one of your cards horizontally or vertically onto any enemy card of **equal or lesser** value.
2. Your Queen may **never** attack.
3. The attacking card may attack an adjacent card or may move horizontally or vertically to a distant defender.
4. If attacking from a distance, you may move one card any number of spaces horizontally or vertically. You may not jump over any other cards. All movement must be in a straight line through empty spaces. The attacker **may NOT** turn corners and it may not move diagonally.
5. If the value of the attacking card is **greater than** the defending card's value, the defending card is removed from play and the attacking card takes its place. The value of the attacking card is not affected; it remains at face value.
6. If the value of the attacking card is **equal to** the defending card's value, **both** the attacking and defending cards are removed from play. Note that the only way to remove a "9" from play is to attack it with another "9" (eliminating both cards from play).

### Attack! Example #1

Continuing our example, the Black player performs an Attack! command, sending his 6 of Spades to attack the adjacent Red Ace of Diamonds. Since 6 is greater than 1, the Ace is discarded and the 6 takes its place, once again threatening the Red Queen

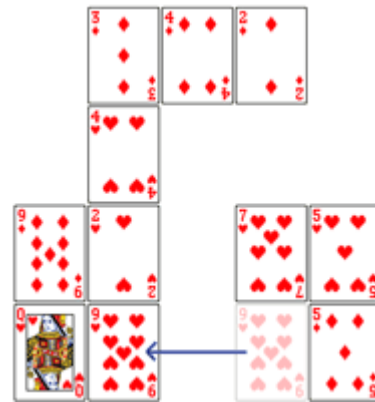


### Attack! Example #2

The Red player counters on his turn, also performing an Attack! command, moving his 9 of Hearts in a straight line to attack the 6 of Spades, defeating it. The Red Queen is now very well protected.

Had the 9 of Hearts actually been a 6 of Hearts, both cards would have been discarded, as they would have equal values.

The Black side is not displayed in this example, but looking at the image to the left, you can see that the Red player really had no other option. The 2 of Hearts is not powerful enough to attack the 6, and the Queen could not Swap with the 9 of Diamonds, because that would open up the Queen to capture by the 9 of Spades



## CAPTURING THE QUEEN

A Queen is captured if it is attacked by any opposing card, even the lowly Ace. If you capture the opposing Queen, you win the game!

Note that since Queens may not perform Attack! commands, a Queen is never able to capture the other Queen. In the extremely unlikely event that all the numbered cards from both armies are eliminated, a stalemate occurs, and the game is a draw.

## OPTIONAL RULES

### Alternative Setup #1 - Minor Deployment

Instead of dealing out your entire army randomly, each player secretly draws one row of cards at a time, and places their cards **face-down** in any position along that row that they wish. Once both players have drawn and placed their first-row cards, they draw 5 new cards for their second row, and so on until all cards are placed (note the empty space must still be in the center of the back row). Then players turn over their cards and the Rally Your Troops phase begins as normal (The Queen's Favor option may still be taken, if applicable).

### Alternative Setup #2 - Total Deployment

For a more *Stratego*-like experience, instead of dealing out your entire army randomly, each player places all of their cards at once. Cards are placed **face-down** in any position on their side that they wish (note the empty space must still be in the center of the back row). The only exception is that your Queen may not be initially placed adjacent to either of your "9" cards. Then players turn over their cards and the Rally Your Troops phase begins as normal (The Queen's Favor option may **not** be taken).

### Game Board

As more Army Ants are defeated, your battle field will become more open and your armies more maneuverable. However, the empty spaces can be troublesome. An option is to create a "game board" to keep your cards nicely lined up. Simply create a grid 5 spaces wide by 8 spaces deep. Make sure each space can fit one playing card. A game board is often helpful for younger players.

We hope you enjoy playing Army Ants. Have fun!



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