



IceFu

Designed by Glenn Overby



IceFu is a ritual combat game for two players, using two stackable Icehouse stashes and an opaque container big enough to hold 30 pyramids. The object is to eliminate enough pyramids to make the opponent unable to continue play.

Setup

The older player chooses which player goes first. Each player draws three large, two medium, and two small pyramids at random from the container. Sixteen pyramids remain in the container.

Playing

A turn has up to seven parts.

1. The first player draws two new pyramids from the container, of different sizes if possible. The second player then draws. (On the first turn, draw seven pyramids instead as given under Setup.)
2. First player uses one trigram (see below) to attack.
3. Second player uses one trigram to defend against the attack.
4. Second player may lose pyramids from the defending trigram.
5. Second player uses a different trigram to counter-attack.
6. First player uses a different trigram to defend.
7. First player may lose pyramids from the defending trigram.

The roles of first player and second player alternate every turn.

Trigrams

A trigram is three pyramids, a small stacked on a medium stacked on a large. (Other Icehouse games call this a tree.) Players who need to use a trigram in step 2, 3, 5, or 6 have two choices.

- Build a new trigram from any unused pyramids owned by the player.
- Use an existing trigram owned by the player.

Trigrams when built continue to exist until they lose one or more pyramids. The surviving pyramids are no longer a trigram, and can be used to build new trigrams in future turns. A full trigram cannot be broken up voluntarily.

Resolving Conflicts

In steps 4 and 7 above, the conflict of attack and defense is resolved. As Yin and Yang are eternal opposites, so too are the two stash colors. A perfect defense to every trigram is found in its exact opposite.

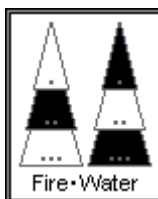
- **Each pyramid of the defending trigram that is the same color as the corresponding pyramid of the attacker is removed from the game.**

Incomplete trigrams are useless in battle. In future turns, their remaining pyramids may be merged with other "loose" pyramids to form new trigrams.

Winning the Game

When a player needs to use a trigram, and cannot build one or play an existing one, that player has lost. If an entire turn results in no lost pyramids for either player, the game is drawn.

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IceFu is inspired by the relationship of the I Ching to the martial art of Tai Chi. Each of the eight I Ching trigrams has a traditional association with a Tai Chi technique: Heaven—ward off, Earth—roll back; Lake—rend, Mountain—pluck; Fire—push, Water—press; Wind—elbow stroke, Thunder—shoulder stroke.

