

Root and Thorn

Introduction

Root and Thorn is a territory control board game that pits two players against one another in the role of two sentient forests fighting to expand their borders. Players will spread their forest's undergrowth, sprouting trees to claim the land around them as their own. As space dwindles, who will be the dominant forest?

Inventory

To play Root and Thorn, players will need the following items:

-**Board:** Root and Thorn is played on a 10x10 gridded board, with a horizontal dividing line down the center to mark the original boundaries for each side.

-**Tree Tokens:** Players will each have the following *Tree Tokens*; 1x Maple, 3x Oak, and 5x Birch. These represent the trees growing in the forest, and will be placed as permanent territory markers. Tree Tokens feature a picture of the relevant tree's leaf on them, as pictured below.

-**Undergrowth Tokens:** Players will each have **25 Undergrowth Tokens**, which are a temporary territory marker, and can be removed during play. Undergrowth Tokens feature a picture of a shrub on them, as pictured below.

To separate the pieces for each side, the pieces will have either a light or dark colored background, and will be referred to as either light or dark pieces. Here are the respective pieces for reference:



Trees

Maple - The heart of your forest. The Maple is the first piece placed by either player, and may be placed anywhere on your side of the board. No opposing Undergrowth may be placed adjacent to the Maple.

Oak - The steadfast defenders of the forest. Oaks may be placed on any Undergrowth that is adjacent to friendly Undergrowth on at least three sides. When placed, all opposing Undergrowth within 5 spaces of the Oak are removed.

Birch - The scouts of the forest. Birches may be placed on any Undergrowth that is adjacent to friendly Undergrowth on at least two sides. When placed, all opposing Undergrowth within 3 spaces of the Birch are removed.

Undergrowth - A representation of shrubs, saplings, and moss. Undergrowth is the early extension of the forest, and must be placed directly adjacent to a friendly Tree or Undergrowth.

Adjacency

In Root and Thorn, when a piece is *Adjacent* to something, that means it is orthogonally adjacent (forward, backward, left, or right), not diagonally adjacent. If two pieces are diagonally adjacent, they are **NOT** considered adjacent for the rules.

Playing the Game

Before beginning play, players should decide who will play with the light and dark pieces respectively. Play begins with the dark side player, who places their Maple token anywhere on their half of the board. The light side player then does the same, and play continues to alternate between the two.

On your turn, you can either play an Undergrowth Token anywhere on the board directly adjacent to a friendly Tree or Undergrowth Token, play a Tree Token on a friendly Undergrowth Token, or Pass. If you Pass your turn, you take no action and play goes to your opponent. When both players have Passed or are out of pieces to play, the game ends and players count their territory.

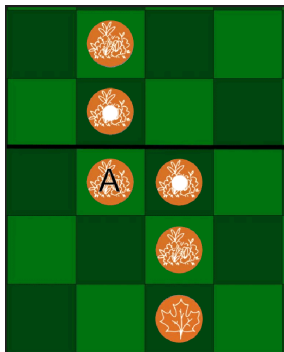
When a player places a Tree Token, the Undergrowth Token it is placed on is immediately removed, then all opposing Undergrowth Tokens within Range (3 spaces for Birch, 5 for Oak) are removed. To determine if a Token is in Range, count the spaces from the Tree Token to the Undergrowth

Token. When counting spaces this way, all diagonal movements count as two (2) spaces. See the Examples section below for clarification.

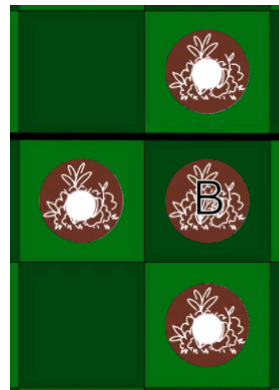
Winning the Game

Once play has finished, players count up the total amount of spaces on the board occupied by their Undergrowth and Tree Tokens, as well as the spaces surrounded by their Tokens (with the board edges being boundaries as well). Whoever has the most territory occupied is the winner.

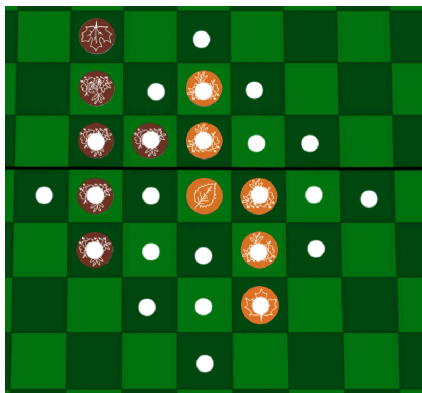
Examples



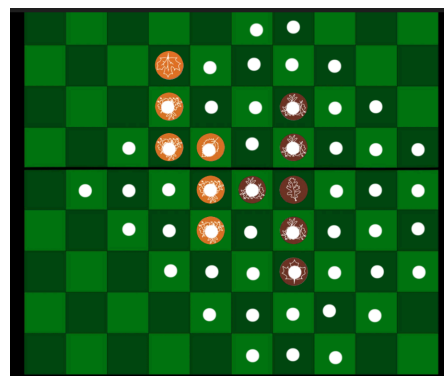
A Birch can be played on the Undergrowth marked "A" due to it being surrounded on two sides by other Undergrowth.



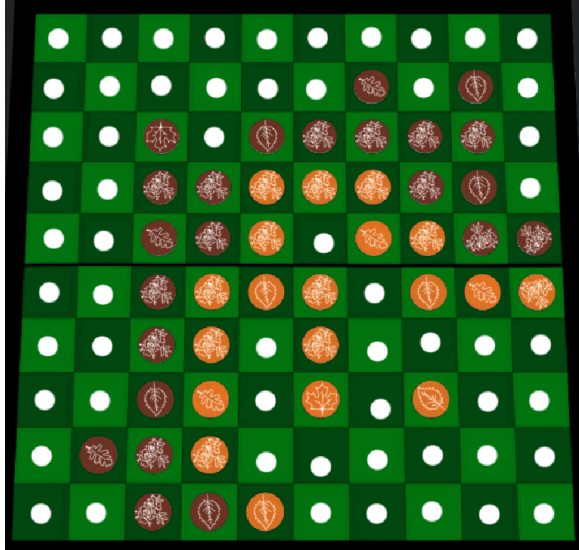
An Oak can be played on the Undergrowth marked "B" due to it being surrounded on three sides by other Undergrowth.



After this Birch is played, all opposing undergrowth within 3 spaces (marked by the white dots) is removed. Friendly Undergrowth and all Trees are immune to this.



After this Oak is played, all opposing Undergrowth within 5 spaces (marked by the white dots) is removed. Friendly Undergrowth and all Trees are immune to this.



In this example, the game is now over, with the Light side controlling 41 spaces and the Dark side controlling 59 spaces, including the spaces their respective pieces occupy. The Dark side wins.