## **The Royal Game of Ur**

The Game of Ur is a race game and it is probably a direct ancestor of the tables, or backgammon, family of games, which are still played today. The Game of Ur is played using two sets of seven checker-like game pieces, these are in your respective bags. One set of pieces are white with five black dots and the other set is black with five white dots. The gameboard is composed of two rectangular sets of boxes, one containing three rows of four boxes each and the other containing three rows of two boxes each, joined together by a

"narrow bridge" of two boxes. The gameplay involves elements of both luck and strategy. Movements are determined by rolling a set of four-sided, tetrahedron-shaped dice (shown on the left), these are in the third bag. Two of the four corners of each die are marked and the other two are not, giving each die an

equal chance of landing with a marked or unmarked corner facing up. The number of marked ends facing upwards after a roll of the dice indicates how many spaces a player may move during that turn. A single

game can last up to half an hour and can be very intense.

The object of the game is for a player to move all seven of their pieces along the course (shown on the right) and off the board before their opponent. On all surviving gameboards, the two sides of the board are always identical with each other, indicating that the two sides of the board belong to each player. When a piece is on one of the player's own squares, it is safe from capture, but, when it is on one of the eight squares in the middle of the board, the opponent's pieces may capture it by landing on the same space, sending the piece back off the board so that it must restart the course from the beginning. This means there are six "safe" squares and eight "combat" squares. There can never be more than one piece on a single square at any given time, so having too many pieces on the board at once can impede a player's mobility.

When a player rolls a number using the dice, they may choose to move any of their pieces on the board or add a new piece to the board if they still have pieces that have not entered the game. A player is not required to capture a piece every time they have the opportunity. Nonetheless, players are required to move a piece whenever possible, even if it results in an unfavorable outcome. All surviving

gameboards have a colored rosette in the middle of the center row. According to Finkel's reconstruction, if a piece is located on the space with the rosette, it is safe from capture. Finkel also states that when a piece lands on any of the three rosettes, the player gets an extra roll. In order to remove a piece from the board, a player must roll exactly the number of spaces remaining until the end of the course plus one. If the player rolls a number any higher or lower than this number, they may not remove the piece from the board.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal\_Game\_of\_Ur Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZskjLq040I