6+ | 2 | 10 min

Rules

Yusuke Emi

VOLTO™

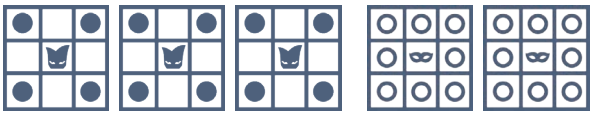
The next Doge of Venice will soon be elected and two families are expecting to see their representative take the title.

Everyone at the carnival is masked, making it the perfect occasion for your family to oust the competition. Discredit your rival on St Mark's Square to ensure you will win the committee's votes!

Game contents

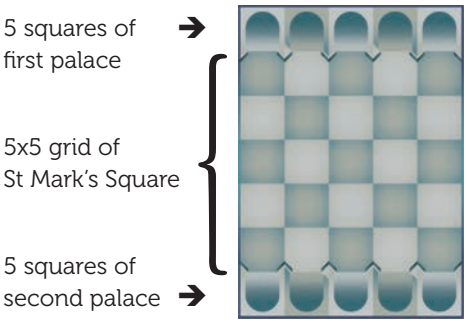
❖ **20 Masks**: 10 of each color.
Each player has the same number of masks as their opponent.

3 Nobles | 1 Soldier | 1 Candidate



3 Advisors | 2 Ladies

❖ **1 game mat** of St Mark's Square made up of a 5x5 grid with two palace rows on either side, each made up of 5 squares.



Object of the game

To win a game of VOLTO, one of the following must happen at the end of a turn:

- you remove your opponent's **candidate** from the game mat,
- your opponent captures **both of your ladies**,
- your **candidate** makes their way to one of **the 5 palace squares** belonging to your rival.

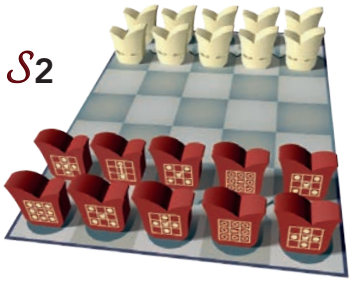
Setup

- Place the game mat between the two players so that each player has 5 palace squares in front of them and they are both facing their opponent.
- Each player chooses a mask color and puts the 10 corresponding Masks in front of them with their eyes facing towards their opponent. This way, a player can see the symbols on the back of their own masks only. See setup example *S*1.
- Each player secretly puts their 10 masks in any order they like on the 5 squares of their own palace and on the row of 5 squares of St Mark's Square immediately in front of their palace. There should be one mask per square. See setup example *S*2.

*S*1

The core concept of VOLTO is that players do not know the identity of their opponent's masks until the moment they dare to capture them!

*S*2



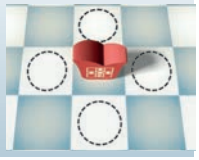
How to play

Whichever player is the most cunning will play first. They start the game and then players take turns.

On their turn, a player takes one of their Masks on the mat and moves it to another square, while respecting the following rules:

- A player cannot skip their turn. They must move one of their Masks on the mat:
  - ❖ either to an empty square
  - ❖ or to a square with an opponent's mask. This means they capture the opponent's mask. See ***Capturing Opponent's Masks***.
- A player cannot move their mask to a square that holds one of their own masks.
- Each mask has a way of moving that is unique to it. This can be found by looking at the symbol on the back of the mask:

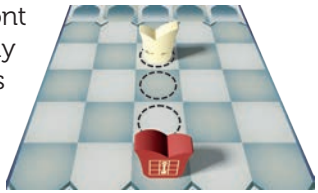
Noble: a noble moves forward, backward, left or right to one of the 4 adjacent squares. They can capture an opponent's mask.



Advisor: an advisor moves to one of the 4 diagonal squares. They can capture an opponent's mask.

Candidate: the candidate moves to one of the 8 squares around them. They can capture an opponent's mask.

Soldier: the soldier moves in a straight line as many spaces as they like, forward only. For them to move, the squares in front of them they wish to move through must be empty. Only the final square in front of them can have an opponent's mask on it if they wish to capture it.



Exception: if a soldier reaches one of the opponent's 5 palace squares, they cannot move from there. Despite everything, they can be captured.

Lady: a lady moves to one of the 8 squares around her. **Beware**: the 2 ladies are the only pieces that **cannot capture an opponent's mask**. This is shown with the Circle symbol **O**. A lady must only move into an empty square.

Capturing opponent's masks

When a player captures an opponent's mask, its symbol is revealed and the corresponding capture effect is applied:

- When a player captures a **noble**, an **advisor** or a **soldier**, the captured piece is removed from the mat. Players continue playing in turns. See example *E*1.
- When a player captures their opponent's **candidate**, they immediately win the game. See example *E*2.
- When a player captures an opponent's **lady**, the piece that captured her is removed from the mat, along with the opponent's lady. See example *E*3. Players continue playing in turns.

Beware: when a candidate captures an opponent's lady, they are both removed from the game and the player whose lady was taken immediately wins the game. See ***End of the game***.

- After moving your mask and carrying out its capturing effect, your turn is over. If none of the conditions for winning the game were met, then it is your opponent's turn to play.

End of the game

A game of VOLTO ends when one of the following happens at the end of a player's turn:

- A player removes their opponent's **candidate** from the mat. That player immediately wins the game. See example *E*2.
- **Both of** a player's **ladies** are captured. That player immediately wins the game. See example *E*4.
- A player's **candidate** reaches one of their **opponent's 5 palace squares**. The candidate is unmasked and immediately wins the game. See example *E*5.

In each of these situations, the winner succeeds in publicly discrediting their rival! They win all the committee's votes and become the new Doge of Venice!

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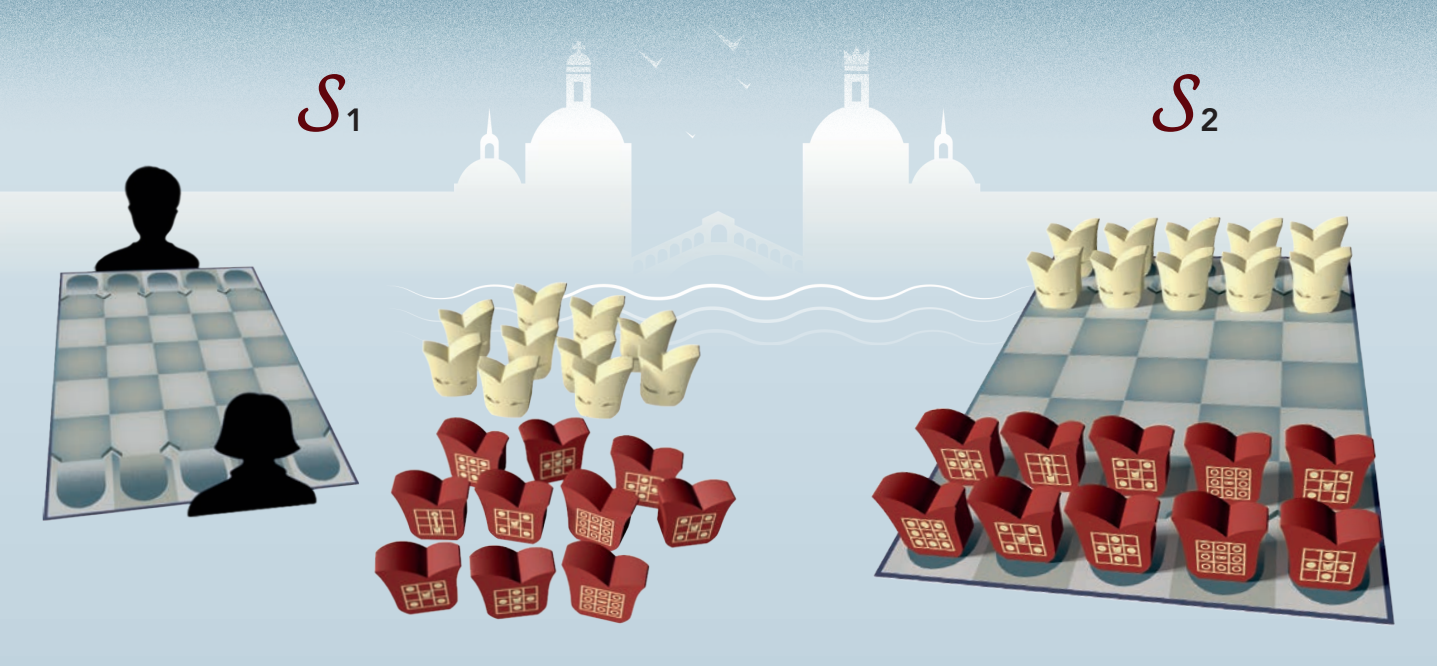
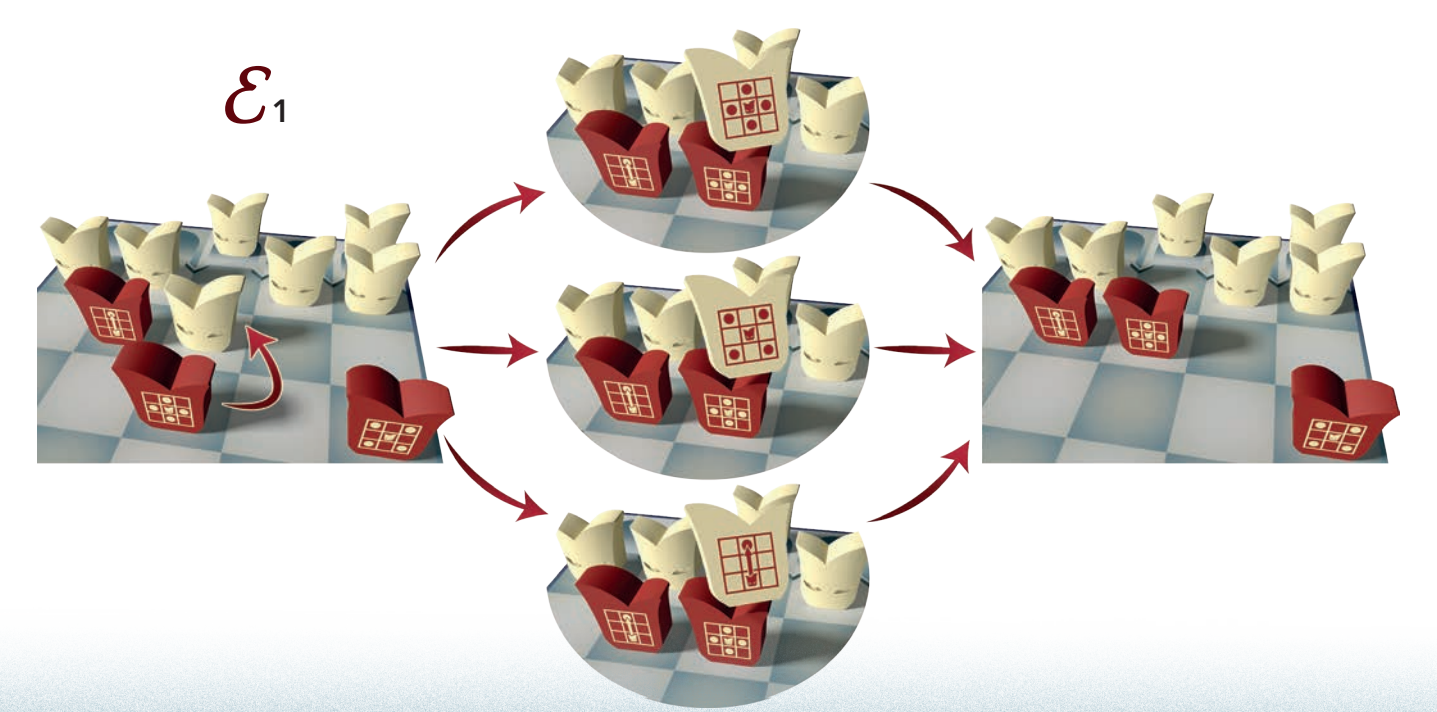
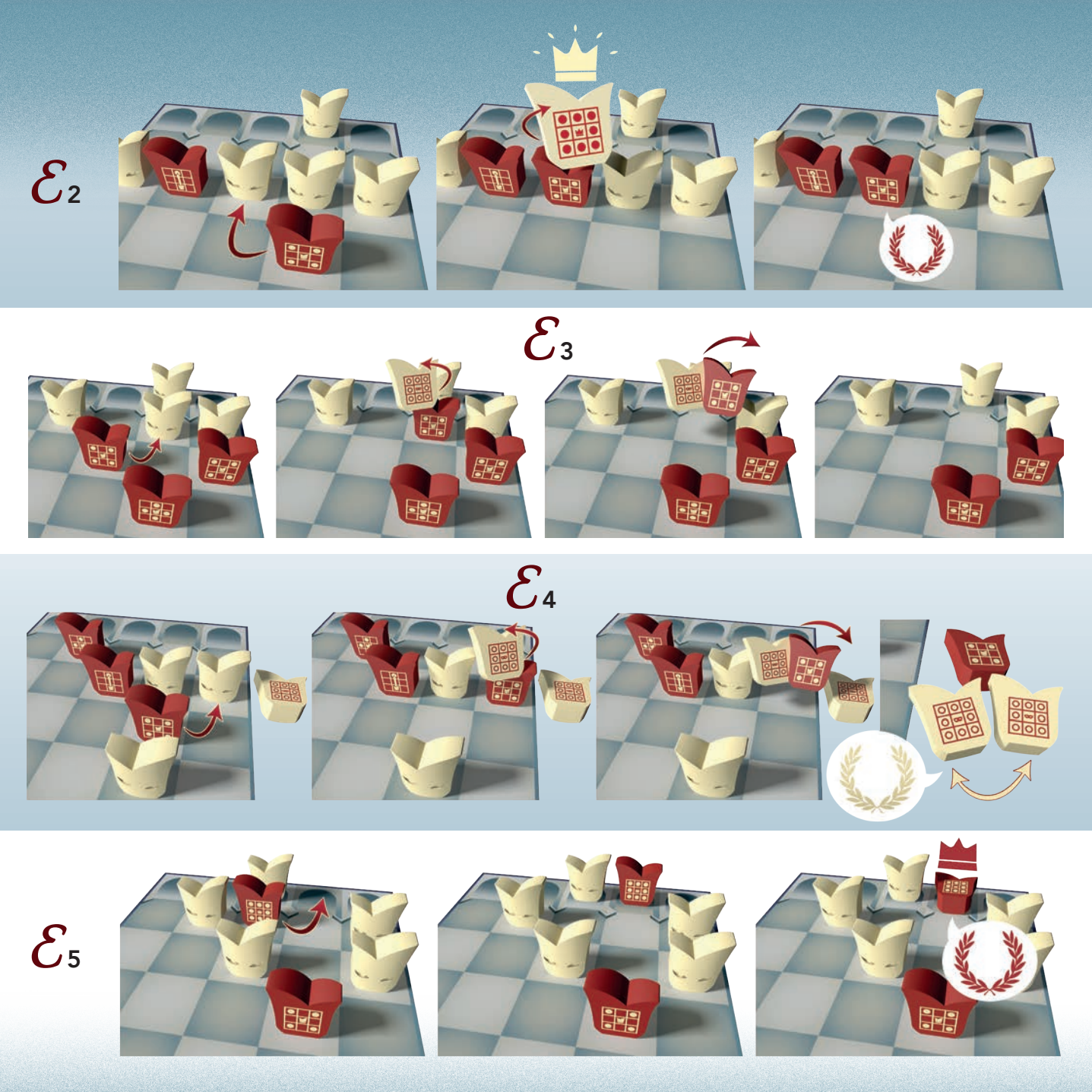

S_1
S_2


$\mathcal{E}_1$


$\mathcal{E}_2$
$\mathcal{E}_3$
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$\mathcal{E}_5$