

review: Risk Deluxe

by Gary Le

Type: Strategy/Board Game

Publisher: MacPlay (800/4MACPLAY)

Retail Price: \$29.95

Street Price: \$19.95

Requires: Any black & white or 256-color Macintosh with 2 MB free memory; System 6.0.7 or higher; 13" monitor or large required for color play.

Protection: None

If you're looking for a quick game of world conquest that is fast and furious, yet clean and fun, look no further. Risk Deluxe is your answer. Based on the original Parker Brothers classic, Deluxe delivers bang for your buck.

The premise of Deluxe is a simple one: rule the world. Playing against as many as five other players, human or computer, you attempt to wrestle countries from your opponents. Play is conducted on a beautiful replica of the world, with all the continents displayed in dazzling colors. At the start, each player takes turns to place a set number of troops in various major regions of each continent. After each region is occupied, additional troops can then be stationed anywhere within a player's territory. After all troops are placed, it is finally time to rumble!

Destroy. Demolish. Conquer. It's always nice to do that once in a while, particularly to let off some steam. Deluxe offers a harmless avenue in which to conduct your innate desire to control and dominate after a hard day's work. Harmless because combat is done through the simulation of dice rolls. It's quite simple really. Combat, in Deluxe, takes place when a player double-clicks on one of his regions and then clicks on an adjacent enemy region. Depending on how many troops are in the warring regions, a number of dice are "rolled" for each side. The defender loses an army for each roll that is lower than the attacker's, while the attacker loses an army for each roll that is equal to or lower than the defender's. This short and sweet process is repeated until the attacker successfully destroys all the troops in the target region, in which case the region belongs to the attacker, or until the attacker decides to back off. Every turn, each player is given a reserve of troops (depending on how many regions the player controls) to place anywhere in the player's regions, with the option to perform a "free move" (moving troops from one region to an adjacent region). Winning

the game is accomplished by giving everyone a good shellacking and controlling all their regions. Easy to play? Yes. Easy to win? Not on your life!

In the tradition of the old board game, Deluxe also offers the special goodies that all Risk players ought to be familiar with. First and foremost are Risk cards. These babies are awarded to a player who successfully captures a region during the previous turn. Risk cards consist of two wild cards and 42 others belonging to one of three suits: Infantry, Cavalry, or Artillery. A “set” of Risk cards is considered to be three cards with: the same suit, all different suits, or any two cards plus a wild. Sets can be turned in — doing so earns the player additional troops. Successive sets that are turned in will also garner the player increasingly higher numbers of bonus troops. As you can imagine, Risk cards play a key role in a player’s success.

Rule variations are also included in Deluxe. Players can elect to play by US or UK rules. These rules vary in the way troops are placed and the exchange rate of troops for Risk card sets. The UK variation also has “mission” cards, or cards that contain missions which a player has to fulfill in order to win. Other game variations include lowering the exchange rate of cards, allowing multiple free moves, and limiting the number of armies that can be placed in a single region. In addition, different sets of graphics for cards are used, based on which set of rules are employed.

With only a few basic things to keep in mind, Deluxe is a snap to learn, but difficult to master. The game’s many variations definitely add flavor and zip. And with its relatively inexpensive price tag, Deluxe is an excellent buy that provides hours of fun for all ages.

Pros

- Nice graphics
- Easy to learn
- Includes numerous variations to keep things rolling
- Relatively inexpensive

Cons

- None