



# How to Play Teaching Guides: #24 Dominant Species

This guide is intended for use by owners of the game looking for a quick outline with a recommended order and structure with which to teach the game. To hear a sample explanation or to learn the game yourself listen to episode #24 of The How to Play Podcast available at [www.howtoplaypodcast.com](http://www.howtoplaypodcast.com)

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## The Hook - What the Game is About

*"Welcome to Dominant Species. In this game you are a type of animal trying to be the most populous and successful animal species on planet Earth. Your animals are represented by little wooden cubes of your player color. Your goals are; to be able to survive on as much as earth as possible, to be the most populous animal on earth, and to be the dominant animal species on as many tiles as possible. Let's talk more specifically about those three goals;*

*First of all survival. Each animal starts with only one type element that it needs in order to survive. The elements are the small round disks. The elements are grass, grubs, meat, seeds, sun and water. For example the snake requires sun. In order for your snake cubes to survive, you need to be adjacent to a sun disk. Throughout the game you can get other elements that your species can survive on or add more element disks to earth so your snakes have more places to live.*

*Your second goal is to populate. You have cubes. You want to get your cubes on as much of the board as possible. Because during the game you will be able to score tiles and whoever has the most cubes on that tile will get points and at the end of the game every tile will score points based on who has the most cubes on that tile.*

*Your third goal is to dominate. You dominate a tile by being an animal on a tile who has the most matches of element disks on your animal compared to the elements on that tile. For example if I had two sun disks on my animal and you have one sun disk on your animal and the land we are in has one sun disk and we have no other matches, I am dominant there and I represent that by placing my colored cone in that tile. This domination can change many times during the game due to adding or removing element disks from the board or to animals. You want to be dominant on tiles for two main reasons, being dominant on a tile will allow you to get domination cards which give you special abilities during the game AND at the end of the game we will score points for the number of tiles that we dominate.*

*Those are your three goals, make sure you can survive on many tiles by having a matching element, cover as much of the board as possible with your color cubes and dominant tiles by matching your elements to the elements on tiles on the board. The player who does that the best, will earn the most points and will be the dominant species on Earth and win the game!"*

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# The Meat - How to Play the Game

## How to Play a Turn

1. The Planning Phase
  - 1.1 Each player has a number of action pawns (AP's) to take turns placing on the "eyeballs" in order to select the different actions
  - 1.2 Continue in initiative order until all players have played all AP's
2. The Execution Phase
  - 2.1 Players will take their turn actions one line at a time on the action display
  - 2.2 Actions on a line are carried out left to right
3. The Reset Phase
  - 3.1 Extinction - if you have cubes in an area you cant survive you die!
  - 3.2 Survival - special scoring (more on this later)
  - 3.3 Reseed - refill the action display so it is ready for next turn

## The Twelve Actions

1. Initiative - Move up in the turn order
  - 1.1 Only one spot jump - get bonus placement after everyone is done
2. Adaptation - Get elements for your Animal
  - 2.1 Choose in order left to right
  - 2.2 Will help you survive and dominate a tile
  - 2.3 Six spots can't take more when full
3. Regression - Prevents you from losing element tokens
  - 3.1 Remove one token
  - 3.2 Any not taken, every animal loses one token of that type
  - 3.3 Cannot lose preprinted tokens
4. Abundance - Place an element on board
5. Wasteland - Kills all matching elements adjacent to tundra
6. Depletion - Allows you to remove an element from the board
7. Glaciation - Grow the glacier
  - 7.1 Choose one tile adjacent to glacier to grow and score points

- 7.2 All but one animal of each color run away
- 7.3 Can choose Turns in advance
8. Speciation - Get more cubes
  - 8.1 Choose a token type you want to play cubes adjacent to
  - 8.2 All hexes adjacent to one token of that type
  - 8.3 Number of cubes = number allowed by terrain
9. Wanderlust - Grow the board
  - 9.1 Choose one tile, place and score points,
  - 9.2 Place one of the available element disks
  - 9.3 Players in food chain order may move adjacent cubes to new tile
10. Migration - Move cubes on board one space
11. Competition - kill up to three cubes
  - 11.1 Get to kill cubes on three tile types based on where AP is placed
  - 11.2 Must have one of your cubes on the tile to kill other cubes
12. Domination - Score one tile - dominator of tile must execute a card
  - 12.1 Population scores points - Domination gets card
13. Review all 12 Actions
14. Reset Phase
  - 14.1 Extinction - Cubes die if not adjacent to one matching element
  - 14.2 Survival - most populated tundra tiles gets control of card and points
  - 14.3 Reseed - slide down disks - add new disks
15. Special Abilities
  - 15.1 Insects - One free cube every turn
  - 15.2 Arachnids - One free kill every turn
  - 15.3 Amphibians - One extra element disk
  - 15.4 Birds - Can Migrate two spaces
  - 15.5 Reptiles - Resistance to one regression
  - 15.6 Mammals - Save one from extinction - top of food chain
16. Scoring and End of Game (Ice Age Card)
  - 16.1 Scoring - Play Hex or Tundra, Dom. Action, Survival, End of Game
  - 16.2 How Bonus Point Track Works

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## The Hamster - How to Win the Game

1. Stay Focused - You cant do everything!
  - 1.1 Have a plan for what you want to accomplish each turn
  - 1.2 Prioritize your actions carefully, what do you need to take first?
  - 1.3 Early on consider adaptation, abundance and wanderlust
  - 1.4 May be easiest to focus on 1-3 elements
  - 1.5 Create or take over an area of the board to dominate
  - 1.6 Do what the other players aren't doing
  - 1.7 Do not try to do too much at once, have a plan
2. Prevention as the Best Medicine
  - 2.1 Adaptation and abundance prevent bad actions from being available
  - 2.2 Take others actions to prevent others from doing them
3. Setup for Round Scoring
  - 3.1 Try to take at least one scoring action each round
  - 3.2 Have at least one good scoring tile prepared to score each turn
  - 3.3 Are you going to go after "Survival" bonus?
4. The Domination Cards - Be aware at the beginning of the turn of the strength/abilities of the cards
5. Setup for the Final Scoring
  - 5.1 Dont forget to dominate as many tiles as possible
  - 5.2 Dont forget to build towards populating as much of the board as possible for the final scoring
6. Good Luck and Have Fun!

### Credits:

Game Design: Chad Jensen

Game Publisher: GMT Games

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Teaching outline based upon How to Play Podcast Episode #24

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