

Mountsandel

A game of hunting and gathering for 1-6 players

Introducing Mountsandel

In Mountsandel, players take on the role of Mesolithic people struggling to survive in Ireland almost 10,000 years ago. Living in the Middle Stone Age, at a time before farming or permanent homes, the Mesolithic people moved between different camps at different times of the year depending on what food they could hunt or gather.

This game is named after the archaeological site of Mountsandel, on the River Bann near the modern town of Coleraine. Mountsandel is the site of the earliest known settlement on the island of Ireland, dating back to around 7,800 BC.

Aims

The objective is simple: gather enough food to allow your tribe to move on to the next camp site. The more people in your tribe, the more food you need to feed them.

The game is played over six turns. To win the game and allow your people to move on, you must secure two food per person in the tribe before the end of turn six.

Food can be found in hazel trees, or by killing a boar. A boar can be wounded three times. When it is hit and wounded a fourth time, the boar has been killed. A dead boar provides six food to the tribe.



What you need

To play Mountsandel you will need:

- A playing surface measuring 60x60cm. We will call this the 'table'.
- Models or counters to represent up to six members of the tribe (we will call these hunters)
- Additional models of counters to represent two wild boar, two hazel trees and six other trees.
- One six-sided dice of a unique colour per hunter, and three six-sided dice of the same colour for the boars.
- A ruler or tape measure marked in cm.

Setting up

Set up the playing area with the eight trees scattered randomly. Imagine the whole table is covered in thick bushes, but the trees block movement for hunters and boars. The two wild boars should be placed at the centre of the playing area, and the hunters placed anywhere touching the edge of the table.

Playing a turn

Place one dice per hunter, and the three boar dice in a bag or cup. Draw them out, one at a time, allowing each hunter to activate when their die is drawn. Each time a boar die is drawn, activate both boars. After the hunter/boars have activated, draw the next dice from the bag. When the bag is empty, the turn has finished.

Activating a hunter

Each time a hunter's dice is drawn from the bag, that hunter may carry out any two actions from the list below.

At the start of the game, all hunters are hungry, but uninjured. The first time a hunter is wounded by a boar, they become injured. If they are wounded a second time, they will become too hurt to take any further part in the hunt and are out of the game.

Action	Description
Move	The hunter can move 15cm in any direction. All movement must be in a straight line. Hunters cannot move through trees, other hunters, or boars. Moving within 10cm of a boar will alert the boar.
Move quietly	The hunter can move 10cm in any direction. All movement must be in a straight line. Hunters cannot move through trees, other hunters, or boar. If a hunter moves quietly, they can move within 10cm of a boar without alerting the boar.
Hunt (stab)	A hunter can use their spear to stab a boar that it is touching. Roll your dice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The hunter's stab has caused a wound to the boar on a roll of 3+ (i.e. a roll of 1 or 2 will miss, a roll of 3, 4, 5 or 6 will hit). <u>If you roll a 1, the boar has struck back and caused you one wound.</u> Attacking a boar will make it alert, whether you wound it or not.
Hunt (throw)	A hunter can throw their spear at a boar up to 5cm away. Roll your dice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thrown spear hits and wounds the boar on a roll of 4+ (i.e. a roll of 1, 2 or 3 will miss, a roll of 4, 5 or 6 will hit). Attacking a boar will make it alert, whether you wound it or not.
Gather	A hunter in contact with a hazel tree can gather hazel nuts for the tribe. Roll your dice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A roll of a 6 means that you have gathered nuts worth one food for the tribe. Any other roll means you have not gathered enough nuts to add to your tribe's food.

Activating a boar

Each time a boar dice is drawn from the bag, roll the dice once for each living boar. The boar will act differently if it has already been made alert this turn (a hunter moving too close, or attacking the boar will alert it).

A boar starting in contact with one or more hunters will always be alert.

Dice roll	Boar has been alerted this turn	All other times
1	Move 8cm away from the nearest hunter.	Stay where it is, snuffling for food.
2	Move 5cm away from the nearest hunter.	Stay where it is, snuffling for food.
3	Move 2cm towards the nearest hunter.	Move 2cm away from the nearest hunter.
4	Move 5 cm towards the nearest hunter.	Move 4cm away from the nearest hunter.
5	Move 8cm towards the nearest hunter.	Move 6cm away from the nearest hunter.
6	Move 10cm towards the nearest hunter.	Move 8cm away from the nearest hunter.

All movement must be in a straight line. Boars cannot move through trees, other boars, or hunters.

A boar which ends its activation in contact with a hunter will lash out and attack it. If the boar is in contact with more than one hunter, the boar will attack one random hunter.

Roll the boar's dice. It will cause a wound to the hunter on a roll of 5+ (i.e. a roll of 1, 2, 3 or 4 will miss, a roll of 5 or 6 will hit).



This game has been created to help engage Key Stage II and III pupils with the history of Ireland's first people. It was developed by Causeway Coast and Glens Museum Service as part of The Royal Society's Places of Science programme.

Useful tokens for playing Mountsadel

