Stone Age
«SoloPlay Rules»

(Original game concept by Michael Tummelhofer, Hans im Gluck Verlags-GmbH 2008)

Additional rules **2009** SoloPlay™ (BGG User – GameRulesforOne)

Introduction: Stone Age is a game that has been designed for **2-4** players. The SoloPlay™ rules have been designed to give a single player the opportunity to play a game with a similar level of challenge without significantly changing the multi-player rules. The following rules have been play-tested extensively to ensure that the game is balanced and is as true as possible to the original concept. It is assumed that the player has a good knowledge of the original rules to be able to play this variant.

Game Setup:
1. Remove all people and markers of **1** color.
   a. Place the scoring and food track markers on the zero position of each track.
   b. Place **5** people on the player's board and the other **5** on the "Hut" building on the main board.
2. Place all resource material on the board in the appropriate positions.
3. Place **10** value in food tokens onto the player's board (3 "2"s and 4 "1"s)
4. Place **3**, "1/2" and **2**, "3/4" tools in the appropriate separate spaces on the board.
5. Shuffle the civilization card deck and draw **16** cards placing the 1st **3** drawn on the **2, 3** and **4** material spaces and then turn the remaining cards <u>face up</u> in a stack near the game board. The 1st position will only be used for a designated purpose explained later.
6. Preparing the huts:
   a. Remove 2 "1-7" huts and set aside
   b. Shuffle the remaining huts and separate out **12** of them into **2** stacks of **6** huts each, placing them <u>face up</u> in the appropriate spaces.
7. **Adjusting the challenge level** (optional): to alter the difficulty of the game do the following:
   a. <u>Easier game</u>: add **1-2** cards to the initial draw (**17-18** cards)
   b. <u>Harder game</u>: take away **2** huts, one from each stack, <u>or</u> draw **1** fewer card (**15** cards)
8. Place the tribal elder (start player marker) on the board. It will play an important role throughout the game and will be positioned prior to starting the 1st turn.

Preparing for the 1st turn:
1. **Game limitations to make note of:**
   a. The food markers that are in the possession of the player and in the hunting grounds after setup will be the only food markers in play for the entire game. Once food is used, it is deposited into the hunting grounds to be collected by "hunters" or by card award. No additional food will enter the game.
   b. Resource materials, when used, are placed to the side of the game board and can only re-enter the game as a result of a card award. It will be crucial for the player to plan the game accordingly.
   c. Any remaining resources (other than food), people in the Hut or tools left on the board will count against the player at game's end.
2. **Important player setup decisions:** At this point the player needs to determine how much of each resource will be available during play.
   a. It is suggested that the player, without changing the order of any stack, should review the huts and cards to determine a plan for the game. These can be looked through at any time during the game.
   b. First the player should determine if the food supply should be increased above **10** for the game. Every food placed into the <u>hunting grounds</u> reduces the player's score by **2** points. This will be performed before the 1st turn. So the player may start in the negative to begin the game. Once this is done, no additional food will be added or available during play. Set all remaining food markers aside.
   c. The player now needs to determine whether to remove some of the resources from the game to limit possible lost points at game's end.
      i. **Strategy note:** It may take a few games to determine how to use the information available as a result of looking through the huts and cards to get a reasonable starting setup. The game rules are setup to put the <u>player</u> in control of the game elements and to determine the best strategy needed to maximize the points.

d. **The roles of the tribal elder** (start player marker)
   i. The tribal elder will have **3** important roles in the game determined by his board position:
      1. He will determine what <u>type</u> of material can be used as <u>food</u> or as an **offering** to the tribal elder in the event of starvation. Explained in "**Ending a Turn**".
      2. He will determine what <u>type</u> of material can be used to <u>purchase cards</u>. This will include food, food track and tools.
      3. The area that he is in during a given turn can <u>not</u> be used to place workers. **Example**: if he is in the forest, the player can not place any people in the forest to collect wood.
e. <u>Placing the tribal elder</u>:
   i. As the last step in the startup, the player needs to determine which area the tribal elder will start in and affect in the 1ˢᵗ turn.
   ii. Going forward the tribal elder will move in a clockwise circular path around to each area on the board at the end of each turn unless a **4** resource card is purchased as noted later. (**Example**: forest, clay pit, quarry, river, village, hunting ground, forest etc.)
f. The game is now ready to begin play. Play is the same as the normal rules, place workers and resolve.

Explaining the game board: note the differences with some of the buildings
1. <u>Resource areas</u> (hunting grounds, forest, clay pit, quarry and river) – collecting resources is no different except that the tribal elder blocks the availability of one of them.
   a. <u>Tribe/Game Resource limitations</u>:
      i. **Reminder**: Resources are single use commodities (except food) that when used are not returned to the game unless directed by **card**. This is one of the most crucial elements to be planned for and managed in the game.
      ii. **Capacity limitation**: The player can not collect more of <u>one</u> type of resource than the number of people in the tribe. (**Example**: The player has **5** workers, he can collect a maximum of **5** wood, **5** clay, **5** stone and **5** gold)
      iii. Any materials earned through a higher than expected roll **costs** the player **2** points per resource. The player is never obligated to use tools so the "over-collection" is strictly roll based. (**Example**: the player has **4** wood and **5** people in his tribe and rolls a **6** for the one placed. The player takes a wood and **loses 2** points due to the resource limitation). This will also apply to food collection.
      iv. If a <u>card</u> dictates the taking of resources, freely or by roll, the tribal elder does <u>not</u> restrict this. Resource limitations and penalties will still apply if the player desires to collect the card.
2. <u>The village</u>: If the tribal elder is <u>not</u> in the village, the player can occupy **1**, **2** or all positions in the village depending on the position of the marker on the **food track**. For **0** or **1**, **1** position can be occupied, for **2**, up to **2** and for **3** or more, all village spaces can be occupied. They must be activated in a particular sequence.
   a. <u>Tool Maker</u>: (it is activated 1ˢᵗ if occupied) – action is the same, get a tool
      i. The player has an additional choice to make when acquiring more tools:
         1. When a 2ⁿᵈ or more tools are acquired, the player may flip an existing tool before drawing another. (**Example**: The player can get a 2ⁿᵈ tool and flip the "1" to a "2". On getting a 3ʳᵈ, the player can turn in the "2" and take a "3". Likewise, when a 4ᵗʰ is retrieved the "3" can be flipped to a "4". All of this can be done before drawing a "2ⁿᵈ" tool marker.
            a. Remember that a tool can not be "split" but is used to modify a single die roll. This needs to be taken into account. **Note**: No change given for card purchase.
         2. Tools remaining on the board at game's end will count **against** the player at <u>lowest</u> face value. The player starts with **9** points in tools on the board so if no tools are taken then **9** points will be counted against the player at game's end. (**Example**: if the player acquires **4** tools and takes **2** separate markers and flips them to the "2" side, this will leave 2 "3" tools and 1 "1" tool on the board to count **7** points **against** the player. By choosing instead to make a "3" and a "1" tool, the player will leave only **5** points on the board.)
         3. **Note**: Tools spent to purchase cards will be out of the game after use. The tools can/should be used prior to purchase, if possible.
   b. <u>The Field</u>: (activated 2ⁿᵈ in the village, does not have to be immediately after the Tool Maker) – action is the same, move up the food track
      i. In the SoloPlay™ variant the player must "**pay**" an amount in **food** equal to the number of **people** in the Hut building to advance the food track. Deposit the food used into the <u>hunting grounds</u> and

advance the marker on the food track. (**Example**: at game start there are **5** people in the hut. It will take a field worker placement and **5** food to advance the food track marker.)

    ii. As the player expands the tribe, the Hut is emptied thus lowering the cost of advancing the food track.

  c. <u>The Hut</u>: (activated 3rd) – action is the same, acquire a "worker"

    i. Therefore, the hut can not be used before the field to lower the cost of advancing on the food track in the same turn.

  d. <u>Civilization card area</u>: (there will be **3** cards active at the start of each turn, normally in the **4, 3** and **2** resource positions)

    i. **Reminder**: The only resources that can be used to purchase cards are the same as the <u>current location</u> of the tribal elder and are removed from the game, except food, when spent.

      1. If the tribal elder is in the forest then <u>only</u> wood can be used, clay pit / clay, <u>hunting grounds</u> / <u>food</u>, quarry / stone, river / gold.

      2. If the tribal elder is in the village, the player can use <u>tools</u>, no change given, and/or <u>food track</u> positions to purchase the desired card(s). No sacrificing is allowed.

    ii. The use of this area is the same in the game except that the "1" resource space is left empty unless the player chooses to "purchase" a card for **3** or **4** resources.

      1. **2** resource card: normal rules apply, no additional options granted.

      2. **3** resource card: in addition to collecting the card, the player can **move** an <u>unoccupied</u> card in the **2** or **4** position <u>or</u> from the <u>top of the draw stack</u> to the vacant "1" position. Only **3** cards will be in play, so if this option is taken then only the **3, 2** and **1** positions will be filled until the "1" card is purchased, for **1** resource, reverting back to a **4, 3** and **2** setup.

      3. **4** resource card: in addition to collecting the card, the player has the option to perform some or all of the following:

        a. The player can move an <u>unoccupied</u> card in the **2** or **3** position <u>or</u> from the <u>top of the draw stack</u> to the vacant "1" position.

        b. The player can cycle the hut stacks independently any number of positions as long as the same sequence is retained. **Note**: Worker placed on a stack being cycled is placed back on top of the stack. The "new" top one can now be built.

        c. The player can choose to <u>immediately</u> move the tribal elder to another area other than the next one in the sequence. It will limit the rest of the <u>current</u> turn and the <u>next</u> turn by the position selected.

        d. <u>Possible move combination</u>: The player can choose to purchase the **4** resource card, move the tribal elder to a different area and then use a different resource to purchase <u>another</u> card.

    iii. All cards function as in the normal game with the following exceptions: **Note**: Resources received from cards are **not** taken from the board but from materials that are <u>not currently in play</u>, if available, **except** food and tools which are taken from the board.

      1. For the **6** option "roll" card, the player can decide to roll **1-3** dice. If more than **1** die is rolled then do the following:

        a. If the same number is rolled on **2-3** dice, the player doubles/triples the award.

        b. If any of the numbers are different, then the player chooses which one to take and subtracts the total of the remaining die/dice from the score. (**Examples**: If a **4, 4** and a **3** are rolled, the player will likely take 2 gold and then accept moving back **3** points on the scoring track or if a **4, 3** and **2** are rolled the player might take a gold and then lose **5** points)

      2. The card that <u>grants a card</u> permits the player to draw a card from the top of the stack that is <u>not</u> in play (left out during setup) **or** to take any one that has been <u>discarded</u>.

3. <u>Placement penalty</u>:

  a. If a worker is placed but is <u>not activated</u> or is unable to be placed in an "active" area for any reason, the player subtracts **2** points for each worker. (**Example**: The player is counting on getting resources to purchase a hut. Due to an oversight the goods are needed elsewhere. The player loses **2** points for the inactive worker placed.) However, the player **won't** be penalized for rolling and not receiving goods due to a low pip count since the worker was in an active area. **Definition**: "Active" area = area that can provide a resource/function.

i. It may be best to place the workers in an area and take a chance on the roll to lessen the damage as long as there is at least 1 item there. All workers must be placed each turn.

b. **Note**: A worker can never be placed in an empty area or one that can not provide its function (**Example**: the field (food track is already at 10), hut (hut is empty) or tool maker (no tools to collect).

Ending a turn: perform the following, in sequence, as needed:

1. If a card was not purchased, discard the "2" card and in any case arrange the cards and draw another one for the highest position as needed, either "3" or "4" depending if there is a card is in the "1" position.

2. Feed your people, 1 food or tribal elder resource per person minus the food track

   a. Starvation note: if the player is unable to feed all of his people, he loses 10 points and must lose all current food in his supply as stated in the normal rules.

      i. Additionally, the player **must** choose one of the following 3 options:

         1. Lose 1 tribal elder resource (offering) or;
         2. Lose 2 non-tribal elder resources (offering) or;
         3. Lose 5 additional points
         4. **Example**: If the tribal elder is in the forest, the player can offer 1 wood or some other combination of 2 resources (same or different, stone and clay or 2 stone for example). This will extend to the food track and tools. Food can not be offered in this case since it had to be given up before the added penalty.

3. Advance the tribal elder to the next area, **if** he was not moved this turn through the "4" resource card function.

Continue playing round by round until an end game condition has been met

1. Civilization card area can not be filled to 3 cards in any arrangement
2. A hut stack is empty

Scoring the end game: (perform in any order)

1. Deduct all remaining components not picked up as follows:

   a. –1 point for each wood or clay
   b. –2 points for each stone or gold
   c. –1 point for each card removed from the game for "non-purchase"
   d. Subtract the lowest value for each tool not taken (–1 or –3 each)
   e. Subtract 3 points for each person remaining in the hut

2. Tally up all card bonuses (multipliers and symbols) also;

   a. Gain 1 point for every unused resource on the player's board
   b. Additionally, gain 10 points for every card left in the draw stack

Determining game results:

1. **120–139** points is a game victory
2. **140–159** points is a major victory
3. **160+** points is a complete victory

Strategy session:

1. It will take some practice to best determine how to set the resources in the setup phase. It is crucial to have enough to get huts built but not so short where the player risks inactive worker penalties.

2. Manipulating the civilization cards by paying for the upper levels is important to getting control of the hut stacks and to cheapen a future card buy by protecting it in the "1" slot. Placing workers on the 2 hut stacks and then earning the ability to rotate the stacks to 2 huts that can be built effectively can be a strong move.

3. It was the intent of this design to put more pressure on the feeding aspect since there is no competition for the food track. As with many of the elements in the game, balance is the key to setting up the long term goals. A starvation strategy can work given the right circumstances.

4. As in the multi-player game, the card multipliers are important. When reviewing the cards that will be available, it is important to take note of the biggest point earners and to tailor a plan to be able to utilize them.

5. There is no single method that will win every game. The player needs to consider all possible tracks to be consistently successful. It will take a very astute player to recognize the opportunity when it presents itself.

6. Unless perfectly planned, the player will take at least some negative hits to the score through resource management and left over material. Minimizing is more important than eliminating. Taking out too many goods at the start can leave the player short of options at game's end costing the player points.