

Baratheon

Baratheon is pretty easy to play and win with. Your board position is strong although a bit on the narrow side unless you put some effort into early aggression. Since you are positioned in the middle, there are three possible directions to go and lots of easy cities or strongholds to grab if any of your neighbors make mistakes. Of course, there will also be a lot of neighbors keeping an eye out for your mistakes.

To keep yourself in the game, there is one no-brainer to do: ships on support orders in **Blackwater Bay**. This area is entirely unraidable unless you lose control of **Shipbreaker Bay**, but if that's the case you've lost the game anyway. These supporting ships will make it easy to keep your key areas. Once you have established a strong footing in **King's Landing**, you can support from there as well when you proceed to the west. Getting **Blackwater** early on is a good move, as your supply is otherwise very weak, plus it's a great place for placing raid orders. However, Lannister might have something to say about this move. If you can grab **The Reach** early on as well, you are on your road to victory. Tyrell shouldn't really allow you to do this of course.

Your weak spot is **Storm's End** as Martell can and will most likely grab it sooner or later. From its port, he can threaten **Shipbreaker Bay** with support orders. Also, if you are close to winning, you can bet on Stark supporting Martell's attack. Having a raid, or even better, a +1 raid on **Shipbreaker Bay** should solve most of your problems though. Once Stark gets strong, it's very likely that he'll come crashing down on you at **Crackclaw Point** so keep an eye out.

Even though you have **King's Landing**, don't expect to have the luxury to consolidate power there very often. Focus your consolidating on **Dragonstone** as it can't be raided and only consolidate elsewhere if the opportunity presents itself. Your power should go towards whatever you need at the moment. If you have **Blackwater**, staying ahead of Lannister on the *Iron Throne track* is a nasty move, as you can pretty much destroy his heart of defense.

If you can crush Stark's ships in **The Narrow Sea**, do it, and proceed to conquer his territory and win the game. If you decide to crush Lannister instead, make sure not to accidentally allow Greyjoy to steal the victory from you. Whatever you do though, don't leave **Shipbreaker Bay** open.

Greyjoy

As Greyjoy, you start with the greatest military might. It is worth notice however, that your territory is quite cramped, as well as surrounded by two other houses, both of which can crush you if you are careless. As is fitting, Greyjoy has a lot of strength in its ships and sea areas whereas land territory is a bit lacking in power and barrels. Since you only have three cities and/or strongholds in your starting territory, you will be playing aggressively from the get-go and should capitalize your early potential. Finally, if you act too boldly, up to four houses can ally against you and send you into quick oblivion.

Ironman's Bay is where your ships should be. This area is adjacent to all of your land areas, and can support them very effectively. Of course, your support can be raided from **Sunset Sea** and it should be in your best interests not to allow this. If you put a ship there, your support should be enough to let you keep it. Note that you need to be careful when moving your ships – leave **Ironman's Bay** without support and either Stark or Lannister or both will thank you by taking your cities and strongholds. Allowing Lannister ships to reside in **The Golden Sound** is very risky as they can raid your support as well, or even attack you when you are at your weakest. Drive them back to their port and make sure they stay there.

Your opponents are most likely Stark and Lannister. If their supports are properly arranged, they will be tough nuts to crack. You will have to harrass them though, as they both have better territories than you do, and will become more powerful if left alone. Against Lannister, pretty much all you can do is rattle sabers in **Riverrun**. Stark on the other hand can be attacked either through **Moat Cailin** or via **Bay of Ice**. Reaching out to their barrels beyond **The Twins** can also pay off, as your supply is low. So although you can put some serious pressure on Lannister in the beginning, it's more likely to win against Stark.

Your power sources are not that great. **Pyke** is the best place to consolidate power, but you'll have to put march orders there every now and then. Consider using its port as well if you can afford putting a ship there. The last place that is not that likely to get raided is **Flint's Fingers** so it's a good idea to consolidate there as well. Concentrate on the *Fiefdoms track*, and try to keep the Valyrian Steel Blade. Getting ahead of Stark or Lannister on the *Iron Throne track* is very useful, but hard to accomplish, especially against Stark. You don't need special orders as much as others, but grab some if you can.

Your hand of house cards is the best in the game. Avoid wasting your high cards early on though, as this will destroy your future ambitions. Remember that your neighbors have counters against Balon.

Lannister

Lannister is most likely the toughest house to play for a beginner. You'll be starting right next to the most aggressive house in the game, and need to stay on your toes at all times because of this. The situation is not as dire as it initially seems though, as your territory is actually very easy to defend and packed with goodies, especially barrels. Since you are in the middle of the board, there is not set direction where you should aim your ambitions at but you will need to grasp three cities or strongholds from somewhere to win.

In order to survive, you have to play support +1 to **Stoney Sept** every round. If there is a turn when you actually don't have to do this, your opponents are doing something wrong. This cannot be stressed enough. Without proper support there, you will lose the game, fast. It's best to have knights there or you might get screwed by *Rains of Autumn*. Your first turn should most likely be: defend +2 in **The Golden Sound**, +1 support in **Stoney Sept** and +1 march in **Lannisport**. If Greyjoy puts support on **Ironman's Bay** you need to swap your defense order to a raid. Move everyone from Lannisport to Riverrun. If playing with one-time orders, you might want to put recruit to **Lannisport** but you'll have to leave one footman behind. Only do this if Greyjoy has -1 march in **Pyke** as otherwise they can take Riverrun and you don't want that to happen.

If Greyjoy threatens **Lannisport** by taking **The Golden Sound** you can avoid most of the threat simply by having one ship in the port, raiding every turn to keep Greyjoy from supporting attacks to **Lannisport**. As long as you can keep Greyjoy out of **Riverrun**, you're pretty safe. Once you have some extra troops hanging around, grab **Harrenhall**, **Blackwater** and **Searoad Marches** to act as a shield around **Stoney Sept** and to get six supply while you're at it. After this you can have an impressive amount of troops on the board once some *Mustering* comes around, and you're finally set to start thinking about winning the game.

To get enough cities or strongholds to win the game, you can fight either Greyjoy, Baratheon or Tyrell. It's best to move in when one of them focuses elsewhere or makes a mistake. In order to keep up in power, you'll need to raid effectively, as your own consolidate powers are always vulnerable. If you can, consolidate in **Riverrun** and **Harrenhall**. Going before Greyjoy is essential to survival. Going before Baratheon and Tyrell is also nice, so focusing on the *Iron Throne track* should be okay. Save some power for the *King's Court track* though, a couple of special orders might come in handy.

If Greyjoy becomes too strong, request Tyrell's aid to keep his ships under control.

Martell

Martell is another house tucked away in a far corner. Your home region will be pretty safe, but winning the game requires traveling a bit further from home than with most other houses. Your territory is not exactly impressive, but unless you are very passive, you should be having four cities and/or strongholds there. You'll be keeping an eye out for Baratheon's mistakes, as this will bring you an easy victory. Dividing the south with Tyrell is another thing to look forward to, and you should try to grab as much territory as possible. Just don't overextend, as you are more likely to lose troops than any other house.

Sea of Dorne is a nice sea area that can only be raided from **East Summer Sea**. This means you want to have supporting ships there and keep them there as well. Because you can raid from **East Summer Sea**, Baratheon can't effectively support **Storm's End** so you should definitely claim it as your own. Another contested city is **Starfall** but this should belong to you as well, never forget that. Supporting from **Salt Shore** helps you in keeping it. After claiming these though, it will become quite a bit harder for you to win. You will go against Tyrell or Baratheon. Attack whichever seems weaker to you. Skirmishing over meaningless areas can be effective for you, as you'll be killing troops after almost every victory.

In order to have any chance at all against Baratheon, you want to build some ships in the port at **Storm's End**. These can support against Baratheon's defense in **Shipbreaker Bay** but it won't be easy to go there. If you can talk Stark to your side, it's easily possible though. Against Tyrell, **The Boneway** and **Prince's Pass** are likely to become contested areas. Yield neither, unless you have to. Notice though that if you do, fighting Tyrell later will become very hard. Invading Tyrell's cities and strongholds will be a pain in any event though as they are far away and backed with tons of support. Ships will be most likely necessary here.

For power, consolidating in **Sunspear** is a no-brainer, and probably you want to use its port for this as well if you can spare the ship. *Fiefdoms* is a good track for you, as it allows you to win skirmishes more easily and inflict casualties more often. If you are fighting Tyrell, it's good to be earlier in turn order so you can raid more effectively. *King's Court* is not as important to you as it is to some others, grab special orders if you can, but you should be able to survive even without them.

Your hand of house cards is the most violent there is. Four cards with swords and even a card that lets you inflict a casualty if you lose. Try to be a bit cunning if using it against Tyrell though, as they have a card that can negate its effect. Get rid of your weaker cards whenever possible. Try to inflict casualties

often. If you want to win, you'll need to thin out your opponent's armies.

Stark

Stark has the largest territory in the game which can be a blessing but is also a curse. As Stark, you can play pretty safely, as you already have four cities and/or strongholds in your natural territory, so you'll only need two more to win and these are easy to attain. Once you have claimed your natural territory, you'll have six supply and a reliable source of power. However, your large territory can be attacked from several different points, so you need to be sharp at all times – your downfall can lead to an easy victory for either Greyjoy or Baratheon.

Since you have such a nice territory, you shouldn't risk early invasions unless there is a clear opening. Claim your territory and aim to keep it. The first thing to do, is to make sure you control **The Narrow Sea**. If it's open, Baratheon will come right through and absolutely destroy you. Another thing to watch for is Greyjoy invasion through **Bay of Ice**. The key to preventing both is having most of your ships on support orders in **The Shivering Sea**, as this area should be the backbone of your defense. **Winterfell** is your second backbone, and support there is needed to successfully defend **Moat Cailin** as well as keeping raiding parties out from **The Stony Shore**.

Support in **Winterfell** is vulnerable against raids from **The Stony Shore** and **Castle Black** so it is imperative to keep enemies away from them. If and when Greyjoy decides to put ships to the **Bay of Ice**, you'll need one ship in the port and you absolutely need to be ahead of Greyjoy on the *Iron Throne track* so you can raid his raid and support attempts. Notice also that while it's very nice to have a support order in **The Narrow Sea**, it is very likely to get raided often by Baratheon ships, so never rely on it.

In **Karhold** and **Castle Black** you have the best power source in the entire board. If you have one footman in each, they can consolidate power every single turn. Once you have **Eyrie**, it can become your third power source. After a certain point in the game, you should always have the most power and you can pretty much take what you want when a *Clash of Kings* occurs. Focus on staying ahead of Greyjoy on the *Iron Throne track* and aim for the top on the *King's Court track* – you'll need those special orders.

You will most likely win by claiming two of these three: **Crackclaw Point**, **Seagard** and **Flint's Fingers**. Since you'll most likely grow only more powerful as the game proceeds, you can outwait

everyone else. Robb Stark is a nice card to have when making your final moves so hold onto it.

Tyrell

Tyrell is one of the safer houses to play. You start in a remote corner and no one has any particular desire to invade your territory. Starting far from the action is not quite as great as it sounds, and Tyrell needs to work for its victory. Depending how you divide territories with Martell, you may have a fair territory, but if you're too passive, it's quite the opposite. Your greatest problem will be actually winning the game, as you cannot easily threaten any cities without marching far from home.

One of the most important areas offensively is **The Reach**, so you should take and keep it early. Unlike other factions, you won't be having any particular area that could act as a backbone for your defenses. If you can grab all areas around **Dornish Marches**, then you can put supporting forces there. This will increase the worth of your territory and allows you to threaten **Yronwood** and **Starfall**, although both will most likely be heavily defended. If you cannot grab everything around **Dornish Marches** then you might as well have support in **Highgarden**. Whatever you do, you should make sure to keep **The Reach** from falling to Baratheon, as this will most likely guarantee a victory for him. If necessary, ally with Lannisters to take him down. Lannister is most likely not your enemy.

Keep your sea areas. Enemy fleet in **West Summer Sea** will destroy you. Don't worry though, you can always support from **Redwyne Straights** so you should be able to keep it. Your fleet can also be used to keep Greyjoy in check if you can sail into **Sunset Sea**.

Since you are going to fight Martell, it's good to be aware of their killing power. Losing almost any battle will result in casualties and they even have a card that causes one casualty to you if you win. Don't attack Martell with a single knight unless this card has been played or at least make sure you can win with Queen of Thorns if you do. Martell on the other hand can't protect his troops from your swords, which is something you should also keep in mind.

Once you can afford to put aside one footman, you should start consolidating power in **The Arbor**. **Oldtown** and **Three Towers** are also good areas for consolidating even though they don't contain crown icons. There is no pressing need for you to spend power into any particular track although being ahead of Martell in the *Fiefdoms track* is a good way to keep them from killing your troops every so often.

Always remember that you need troops more than anyone else because of your remote location. You need to be able to go into several directions at once, so use those recruits if one-time orders are in.