The Business Card Games

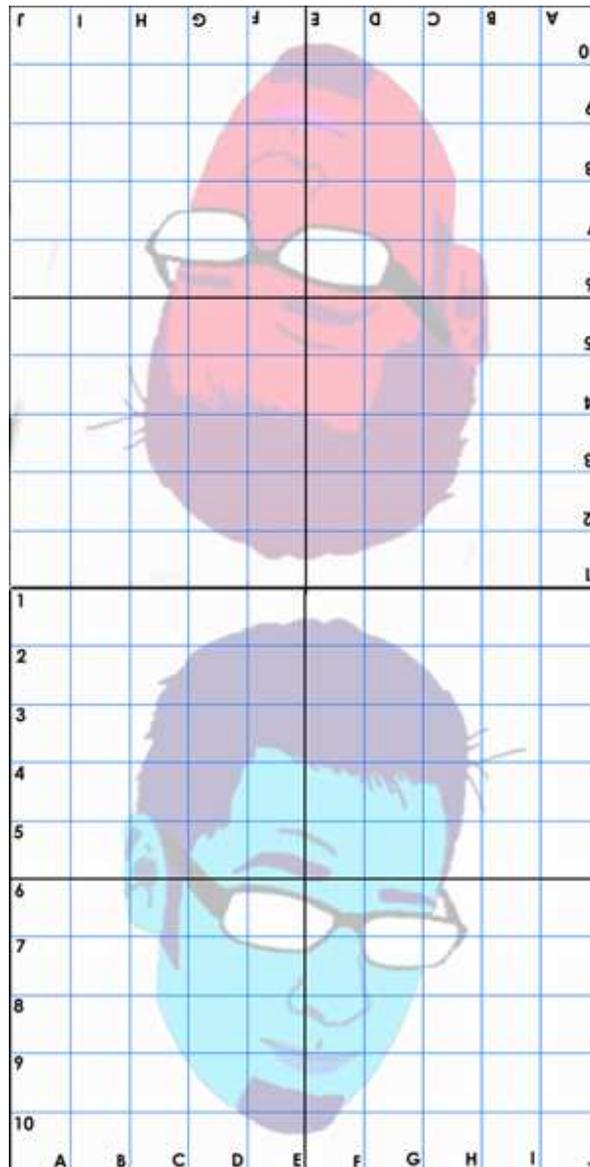# DEFECTOR

A GAME FOR SIX PLAYERS OR MORE

Designed by Doug Lynn

Defector is a game of madness, confusion, and betrayal. In short, it's a game about war. Elements of sacrifice, self-preservation, and teamwork all combine as players seek to be the sole survivor. Careful coordination and planning can help your team take down enemies, but you won't be together forever. Sooner or later, you'll have to manage this complex world all on your own.

Setting Up

Doug Lynn's Business Card Game Board is set up to work with *Defector*. The Game side of the card contains a grid divided into two boards of 100 squares each. Each grid is built of ten rows (numbered 1-10) and ten columns (lettered A-J).


To play, each player will need a copy of Doug Lynn's Business Card Game Board and a pencil with a good eraser. For *Defector*, each player will need two different 100-square game grids (provided). One grid serves as the Private Grid. Players keep this grid to themselves, using it to display any and all necessary information about their game board. The second grid serves as the Public Grid. This grid is displayed to all players as a reference, displaying only information uncovered over the course of gameplay.

Depending on the number of cards you have, there are a few different ways to set up the game board for play.

- Number of Cards = Number of Players (Full Access):

    o Option A: Fold the card in half along its center line such that each side contains a 10 X 10 grid. Stand the card on end. The side facing you serves as the Private grid, while the side facing out serves as the Public grid. Every player's grid connects to everyone else's through Row 1. From this row, players can access Row 1 on any other player's grid.
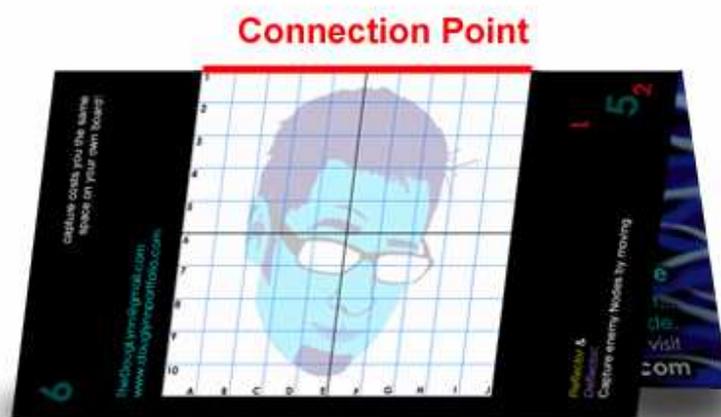
- o Option B: Separate the card along its center line such that each side contains a 10 X 10 grid. Place one grid on the play surface and retain the other. The grid in your hand is the Private grid, while the other is the Public grid. Every player's grid connects to everyone else's through Row 1. From this row, players can access Row 1 on any other player's grid.
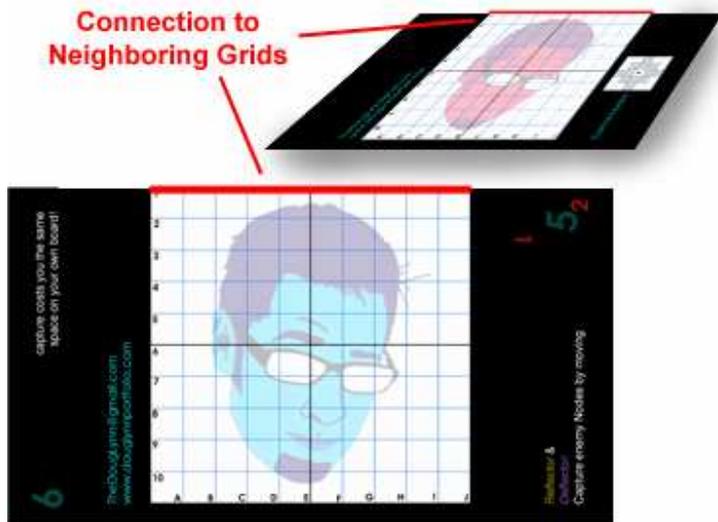
- Number of Cards > Number of Players (Partial Access):
  o A.K.A., "The Island". Players utilize either of the two setup options listed above. Depending on the number of players, a small number of cards are placed in a row in the center of the play area. This center row is left empty. Row 1 on each player's grid will serve to connect to the nearest side of one of these center grids, while none of the player grids connect to each other directly.
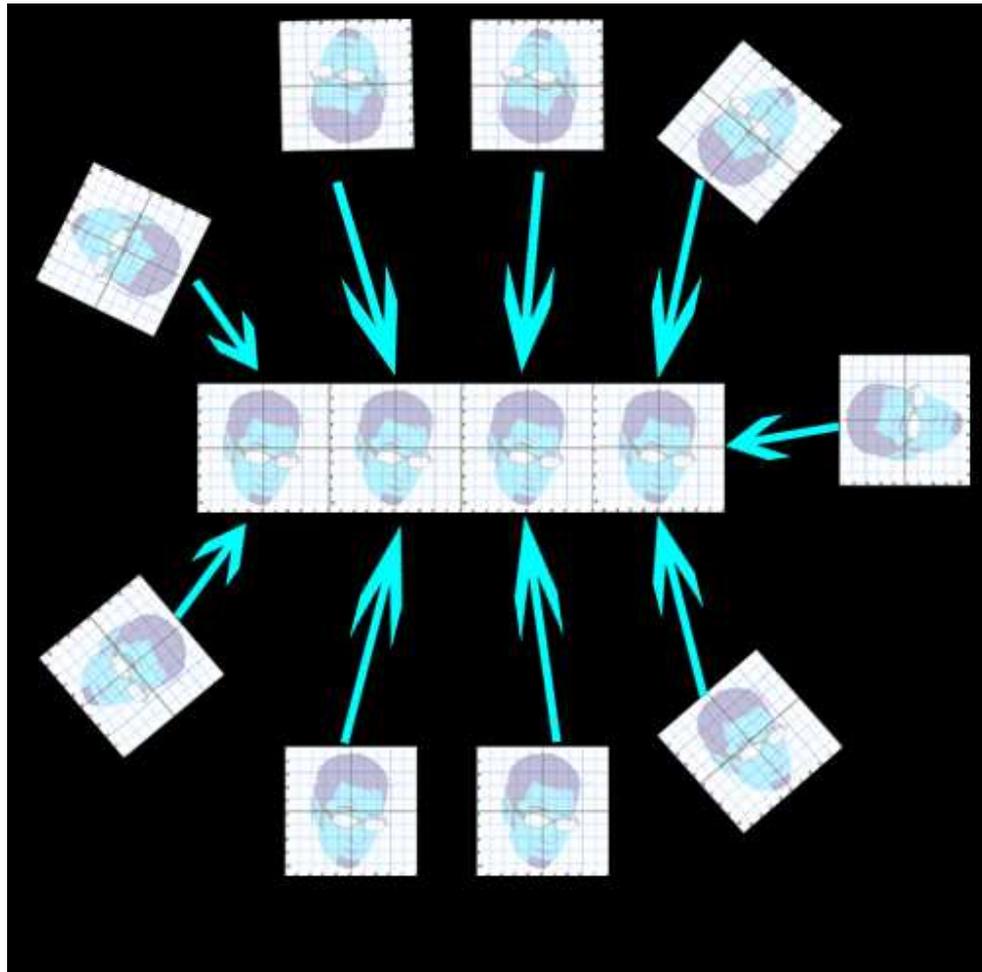

Players can only access other grids by moving through this central area first.

Getting Started

To begin, each player chooses the location of five Control Nodes on the game grid. These Control Nodes are marked out only on each player's Private grid, and they mark out the initial territory controlled by each player.

- A Control Node covers a territorial area surrounding the node in a diamond shape
  - Including the Node at the center, this territory is an area encompassing 5 spaces horizontally, 5 spaces vertically, and 3 spaces diagonally in both directions.
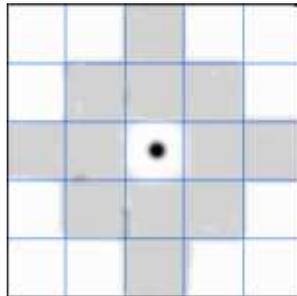
- Nodes CAN overlap each other or be placed on edges, but the territory they control is limited to the grid space.
- A Node is marked out on a player's private grid by a single dot.

Control Nodes represent a player's territory.

- Each player's territory is represented by a different symbol. For example, territory controlled by Player 1 may be identified with an 'X', Player 2, with an 'O'. Stars, boxes, or any chosen symbols can be used.

Additionally, each player selects the location of twenty "Deflectors" to be placed, in secret, around the game grid. Deflectors are protective positions covering a single space each. When hit, Deflectors divert an enemy's attack onto a neighbor's board. They can be placed anywhere on a player's grid (with the exception of on Nodes), but each one can only be used once. Deflectors are marked out by a Slash symbol (/).

If players choose, they can establish teams at the start of the game. However, teams can be formed at any time and can shift throughout the game. For more information about team play, see the "Forming Alliances" entry below.

Playing the Game

Taking turns, players work to slowly expand territory and gain control of all of the opposing players' Control Nodes.

The youngest player goes first.

The player making a move (the "Shooter") selects a location adjacent to any territory he owns. In doing so, the Shooter lays claim to the selected space, capturing that piece of territory.

Claiming Territory

When a space is captured, the player from whom the territory was claimed (the "Target" player) must reveal the status of the space and mark it as one of the following:

- "Null", a space not covered by any Control Nodes. The Target player simply marks this space with the Shooter's I.D. symbol.
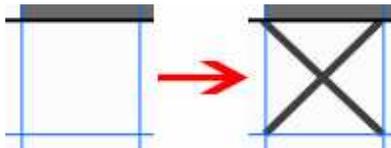

- "Owned", a space within the control range of the Target player's Control Node. For reference, the Target player shades in this space. Once shaded, the space is then marked with the Shooter's I.D. symbol.
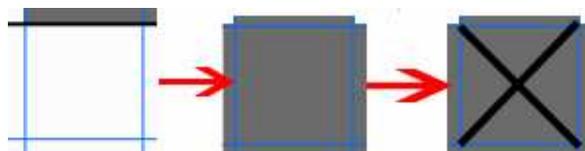
- "Node", a Control Node owned by the Target player. By capturing this space, the Shooter takes possession of all of the spaces the Node controls.
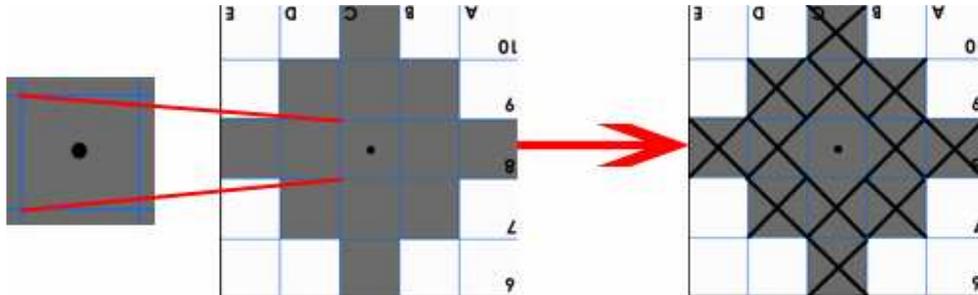
HOWEVER, if that territory overlaps with that of another Node still controlled by the Target player, the Target retains control of any overlapping territory. For reference, all spaces within range of the Node are shaded in, but only those outside of the overlap area are given an I.D. symbol. The Target player marks the Public grid as such.
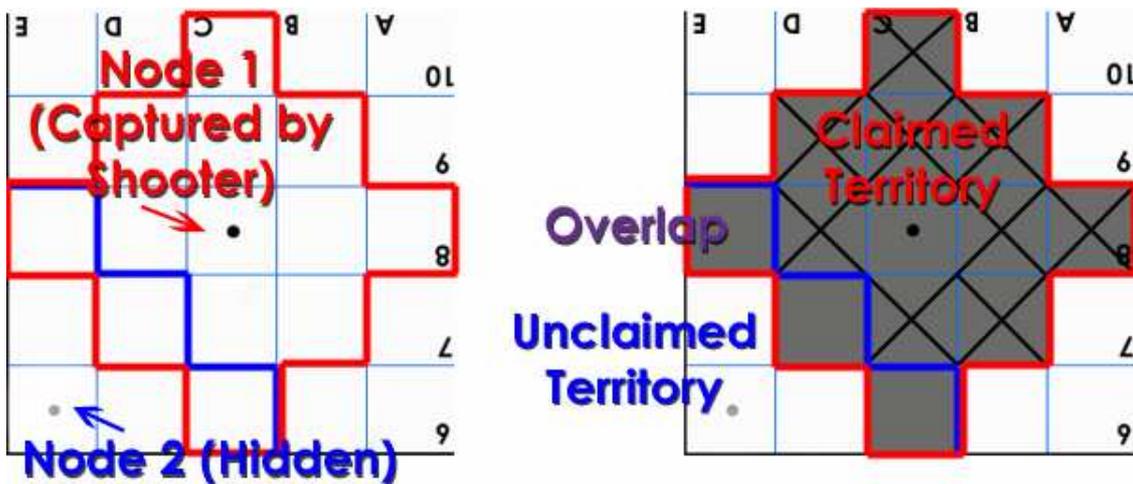
- "Deflector", a space covered by a Deflector. When hit, the space is unclaimed. Instead, the shot diverts to the corresponding space on the board of the neighboring player.
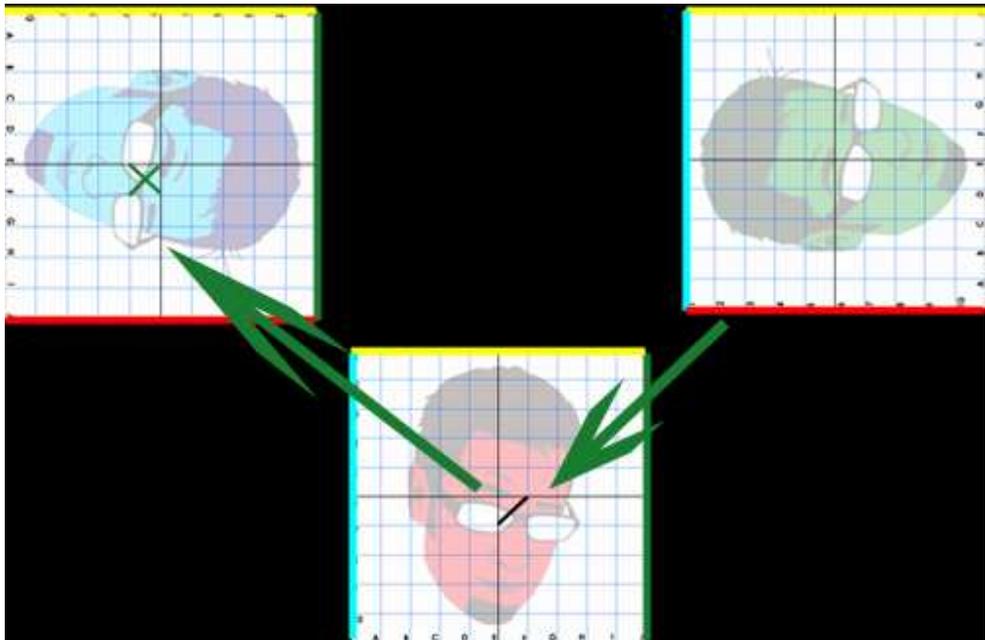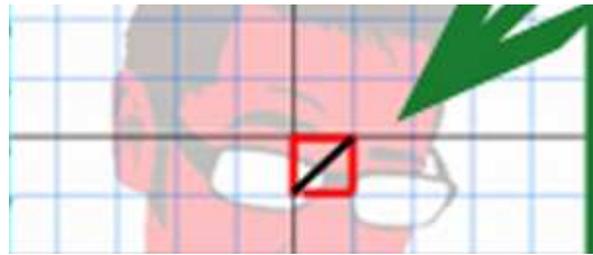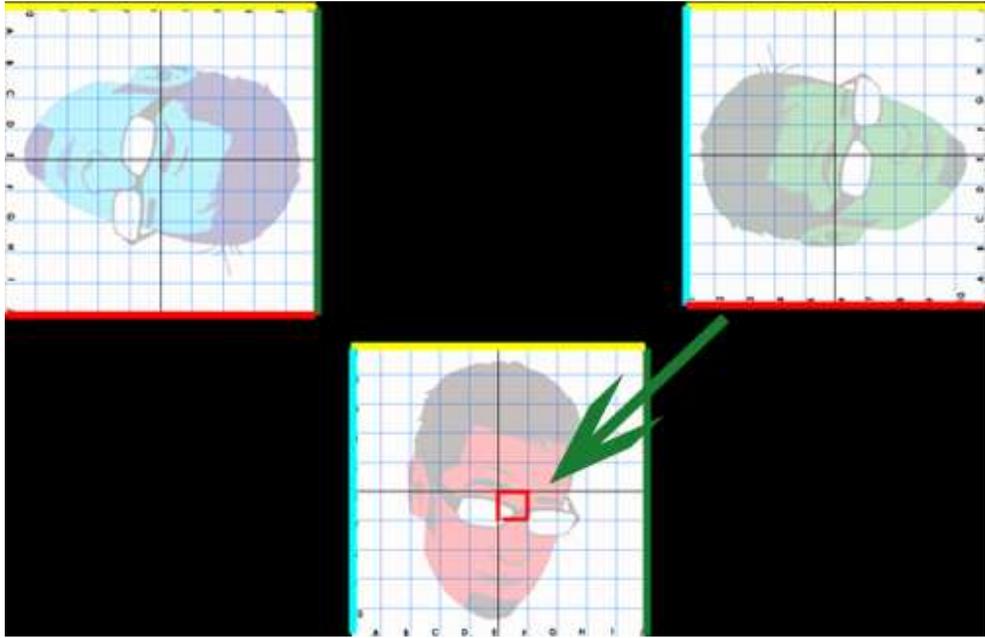
The direction of the deflection varies depending on the Shooter's position relative to the Target. A shot will divert around the table in the same direction it was fired. Thus, if the Target player sits clockwise from the Shooter, the shot diverts from the Target board to the board of the player sitting immediately clockwise. (NOTE: If a shot comes from directly across the table, it diverts clockwise.) The player hit by the deflection must then reveal the status of her space and mark it as described above. Any territory claimed goes to the original Shooter. The impacted Deflector is removed from the board and cannot be used again. Any impacted players mark their grids as such.

Special Rules for Deflectors

On occasion, a shot may deflect multiple times and return to the board of the Shooter. In this occurrence, the original Target claims the impacted space.
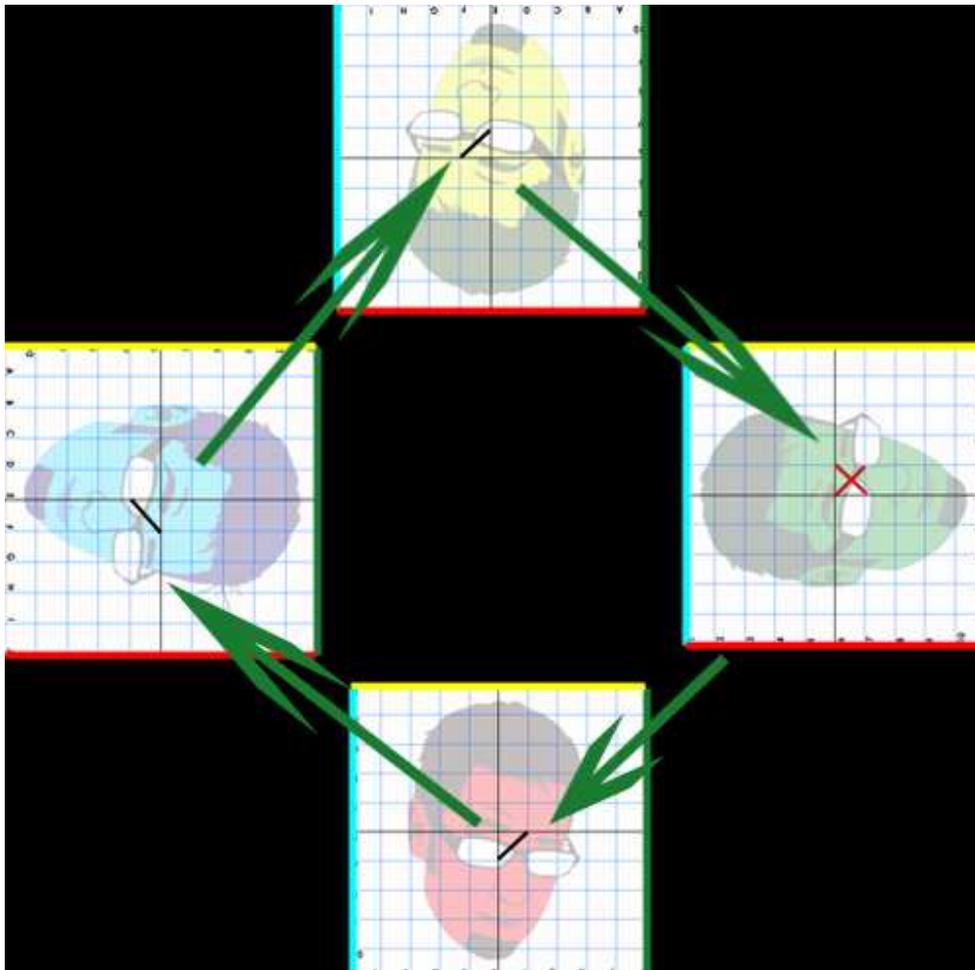
If the shot deflects again from the Shooter's board, the Shooter retains control and still gains the final impact space. (Keep in mind that a Deflector, once used, disappears from the board.)
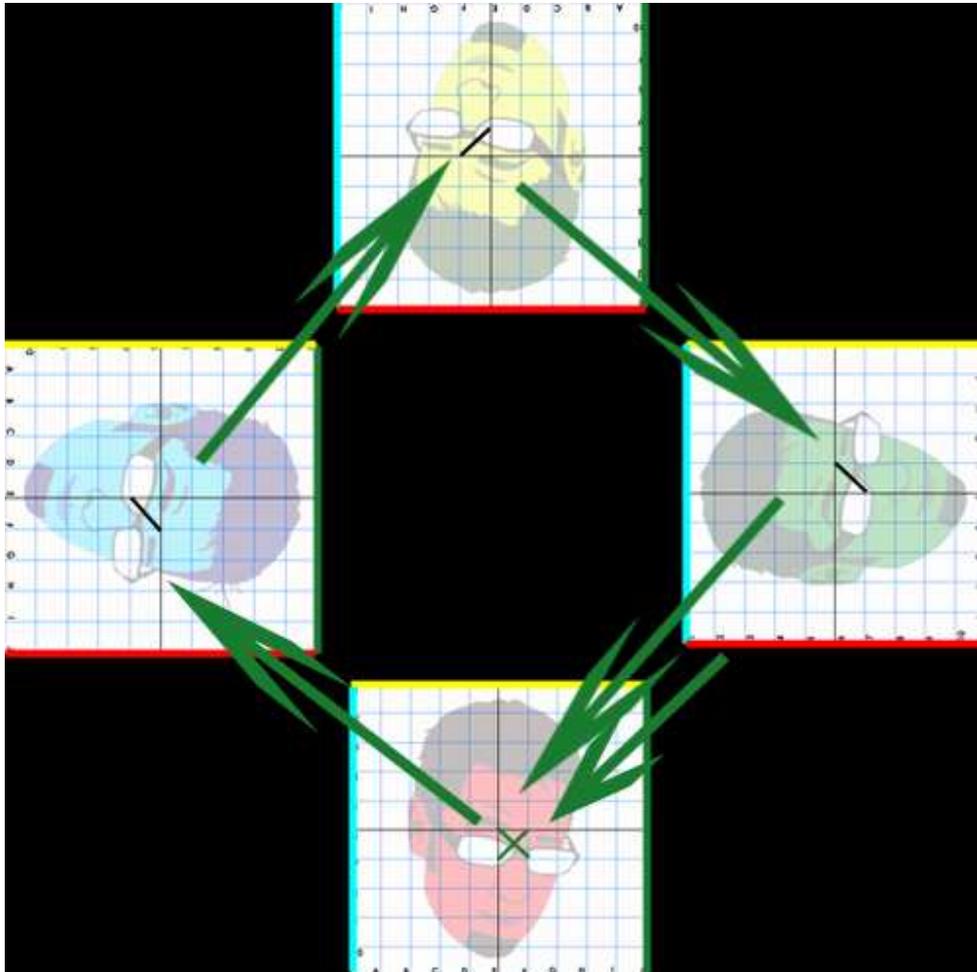
In this occurrence, no reflection takes place (see "Reflection" below).

Deflectors always work in the same way, even when they are not impacted directly. Often, Deflectors will be located on territory controlled by a Node. When a Node is captured by another player, any unused Deflectors within the captured Node's range are activated, diverting shots to the neighboring board. The spaces those Deflectors are on will remain unclaimed, but the corresponding spaces on neighboring boards are hit.

In standard play, deflections can impact team members. Deflections proceed from player to player regardless of team affiliation.

Reflection

After a player captures a space on the opponent's board, the player must concede that same space on his or her own board. For example, if Player One takes possession of grid space (F,3) on Player Two's board, Player Two also gains possession of space (F,3) on Player One's board. Thus, a Shooter is selecting not only a space to claim, but a space to concede. This 1:1 exchange of territory is a key aspect of every move.

Player 1 claims space (D,1)   Player 2 receives space (D,1)

Player 2 claims space (I,1)   Player 1 receives space (I,1)
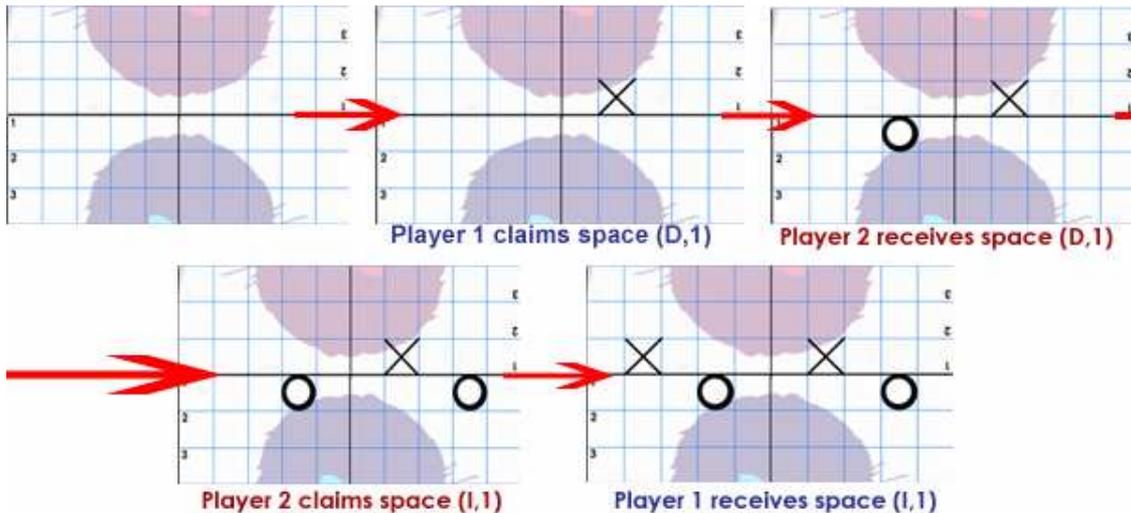
- An exception to this 1:1 exchange is the capture of a Control Node. If the Shooter claims an opponent's Control Node, he gains access to all of the territory that Node controls. However, upon reflection, only the space containing the Node is conceded to the Target player. Thus, while the Shooter can earn up to 13 spaces by claiming a Node, the Target gets only one in return.
- Be advised, however, that this situation also applies in reverse. If the Shooter concedes a space on her own board containing a Node, the Target player claims all of the territory controlled by the Node.
- If a deflected shot travels around the board back to the Shooter, no reflection takes place. Though the Target claims the Shooter's space, the Target does NOT receive the reflection.

Reflection only applies directly to the Shooter. Team members on either side are not affected.

Once a space has been claimed and subsequently conceded, the Shooter and Target reverse roles. Players continue to take turns as such for the remainder of the game.

Forming Alliances

Defector allows for the formation of teams to provide new challenges and strategies. At the start of any player's turn, the player can choose to ally with another player. If the other player agrees, the two players bring their cards together (side-by-side) to form a single, unified grid.
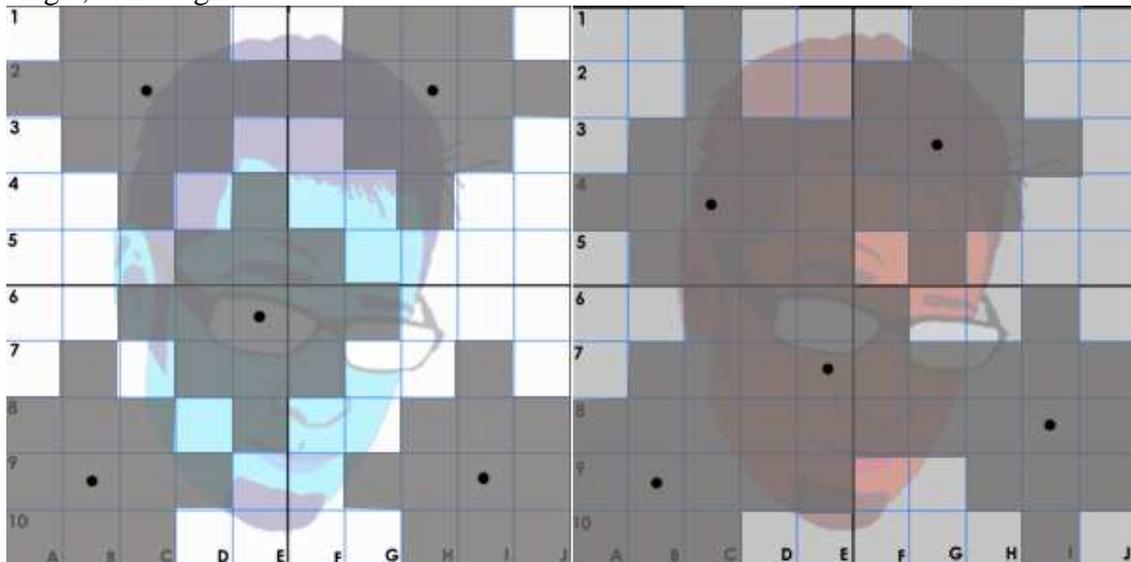
These two players can now coordinate with each other, but still act autonomously, while combining territory and resources.

When an alliance is formed, the allied players choose the location of a **Link Node**. A Link Node serves as the key link between the two allies. In reality, a Link Node is merely an upgraded Control Node. Alliance members choose an existing Control Node to serve as the Link. It has the same properties as a standard Control Node and covers the same territory. The only difference is that a Link Node serves to hold an alliance together. If the Node is captured by another player or team, the alliance disbands immediately.

- Link Nodes can link up to 3 players.
- Link Nodes are marked off on Private grids as Plus signs (+). (For reference, players connected by a Link Node may choose to place on their grids the I.D. symbol of the player whose grid contains the Link. This becomes more important when Master Nodes come into use.)

When an alliance grows to four players, yet another Node comes into play. A **<u>Master Node</u>** can link any number of players together at once. Once again, it takes the place of a Control Node and has the same properties as a standard Control Node or a Link Node. The Master Node serves as the primary link between all players in an alliance of more than three players. It does not replace existing Link Nodes, but acts as another step up in the Node hierarchy. In essence, Link Nodes connect players together, while Master Nodes connect Link Nodes together.
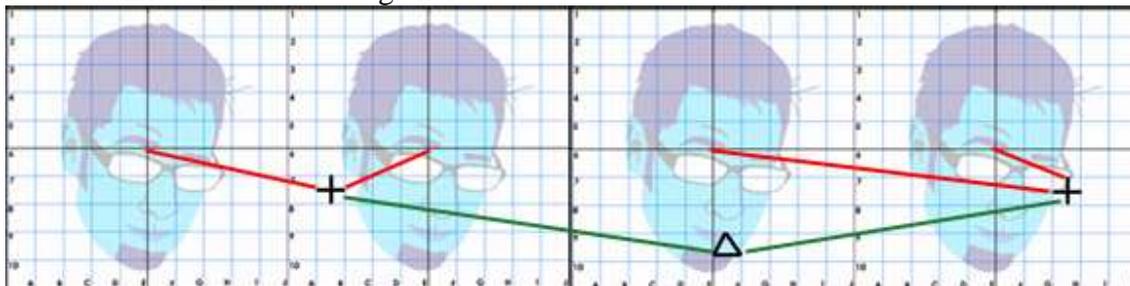
- Link Nodes remain active under a Master Node. Link Nodes still serve to link together teams of two or three players within an alliance. If the Master Node should be claimed by an opposing player, Link Nodes retain control of their respective alliances. While the larger group must disband, smaller teams are preserved.
- If a Link Node under the control of a Master Node is captured, the players connected by that Link are broken up from each other, but they all remain part of

the larger group. In other words, the Master Node maintains the entire group, while Link Nodes serve as a backup system.

- The locations of Master and Link Nodes cannot be altered for the duration of the alliance.
- The Master Node is marked off on the Private grid by a Triangle.

Turns are not based on teams, but on individual players. Each player in a given alliance will get to take a turn. Thus, if an alliance consists of five members, that alliance will get to make five moves, not just one. By utilizing this advantage, alliances can coordinate attacks and strategize in new ways.

Players will utilize their respective I.D. markers to claim spaces, even when playing as part of a team. This way, if and when an alliance disbands, territory does not need to be redistributed.

In the event that a single alliance eliminates all competition from the board, the alliance disbands. If the alliance consists of four or more members, it splits into smaller teams based on the allocation of Link Nodes. If the alliance is built of less than four members, all members separate and play individually.

Defection and Desertion

At any time during a team's turn, players within the alliance can choose to abandon the team. These "Deserters" return to a solo mode of play.

Players can also form new alliances or join up with other existing teams. "Defectors" gain the advantage of being privy to secret information, such as the location of enemy Nodes. However, other players in the former alliance have the same access to the Defector's secrets.

While players can ally in as many arrangements as they wish, they cannot reform old alliances. Once players are divided from each other, they CANNOT join forces again.

Movement Restrictions

Each player's first move on another player's grid can be made anywhere that the grid contacts the grid they are moving from. For instance, if Column A of the player's board contacts Column J of the board he hopes to move to, he can move to any space on Column J of that board. If the right half of Row 1 on the player's grid contacts the left half of Row 1 on the destination grid, the player can move anywhere on the left half of Row 1.

- This rule, however, only applies to moves made from the player's original grid onto a new grid. Every subsequent piece of territory claimed MUST be directly adjacent to existing territory. Players cannot simply pick and choose spaces to claim anywhere on the grid. Likewise, if moving through an opponent's grid, players can only access neighboring grids through previously claimed pieces of territory. A player must possess a piece of territory that contacts the next grid before proceeding, and she can only move from that piece of territory.

Players CANNOT reclaim territory covered by Control Nodes they own. Any space claimed on Node territory cannot be altered until control of the Node itself changes hands. Additionally, players cannot reclaim any spaces on their original starting grids. To claim any of this territory, players must access the grid from an external location and work their way back in.

- The original starting grid is the grid first mapped out by each player. This term also applies to any grid on which a player takes possession of all five Nodes. When all Nodes on a grid are under the control of one player, that grid is treated as the player's original grid, meaning the starting rules again apply. Players can move anywhere that their grid contacts another grid. In *Defector*, this is Row 1 of each player's grid. As before, all subsequent moves must be to a space directly adjacent to claimed territory.

Victory and Loss Conditions

If any player loses control of all five Control Nodes on his original grid, he is eliminated from the game. However, two different conditions can prevent this occurrence:

- If the eliminated player possesses all five Control Nodes on another player's grid, he continues playing. The player takes possession of the new grid and continues play until all five Nodes on this grid are captured.
- If the eliminated player is part of an alliance, he continues playing. The player has the opportunity to reclaim lost territory or take control of a new grid. If the player fails to take full possession of a new grid before leaving the alliance, he will be eliminated from the game.

Depending on the preferred length of play, two different conditions can bring about victory. If a single alliance gains control of all Nodes on the board, that alliance, collectively, wins the game. However, the standard method of play demands that in this occurrence, the alliance instead disbands. This process repeats for any other alliance that achieves a victory state later in the game. The game continues until only one player achieves victory as listed below.

If a single player, at any time, controls more than half of the total Nodes on the entire game board, that player is automatically the winner.

When gameplay reaches a state in which fewer than four surviving players are in control of all Nodes on the board, victory goes to the player with the most Nodes. If this value is the same, the players continue until one player claims a Node from another. By taking possession of this final Node, the claiming player wins the game.

Alternate Play Variations

"The Business Card Deluxe Collection"

A.K.A. "Rotator-Reflector-Deflector-Defector". In this variation of play, the Rotation element from *Rotator* is combined with *Defector* to bring together all four of the Business Card Games. In this version of play, players can only move in a downward direction on another player's board (toward the opposing player). Following each impact, the Target player rotates his board 90 degrees clockwise. In case *Defector* isn't complex enough, this variant adds an extra notch of insanity to the gameplay.

ALTERNATE PLAY: "Safety Among Friends" Variant

In this variation of play, the rules for Deflectors are altered such that deflected shots cannot impact teammates. The shot proceeds in the direction of travel, impacting the first member of an opposing team along its path. This rule stands for any subsequent deflections by other teams, as well. This rule can be applied to any other variant of play.