



Koi™

by Bill Lasek



A Dragon is born of Determination and Persistence



1-4  14+

 40-60 min

You are a Koi fish, swimming to and fro, in search of a delicious meal of dragonflies and frogs. The tranquil pond grows more beautiful with every decorative element you add, lily pads, cherry blossoms, ornamental stones, while at the same time causes turmoil beneath the still waters for the other Koi. Navigate the waters as swiftly as you can amid ever-changing weather conditions to ensure you are well fed. After all, you hope to become a dragon one day.

Contents:

60 KOI cards



40 Movement cards



20 Natural Beauty cards



20 Weather cards



2 sets of 4 Koi
(one set for tracking scores)



25 Dragonflies



10 Frogs



20 Stones



2 Wind tokens



15 Cherry Blossoms



21 Lily Pads



First Player token

Game Board



Object of the Game:

KOI is played over the course of 7 Days (rounds). Players take turns, navigating the pond by playing cards from their hand in an attempt to eat as many Dragonflies (3 Points) and Frogs (1 Point) as possible. At the end of the 7th Day, the player with the most points wins.

Set Up:

Place the game board at the center of the table. Use the side with the larger hex map for 3 or 4 players or the smaller hex map when playing with 1 or 2 players.

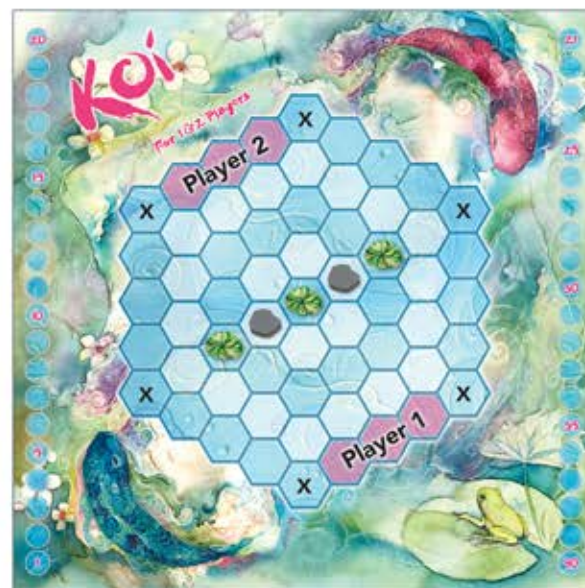
Place Lily Pad and Rock tokens on the board, as pictured below, depending on player count.



4 Players



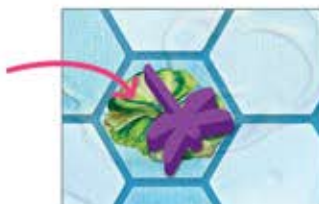
3 Players



2 Players or Solo Play

Place one Dragonfly token onto each Lily Pad token.

Keep the remaining Rock, Lily Pad, Dragonfly, Frog, Cherry Blossom and Wind tokens within reach.



The owner of the game (or the host) becomes First Player. Give this player the First Player token.

Give each player a matching color set of two Koi tokens. One will be used to track the player's score during the game and is placed just off the board near the beginning of the scoring track. The other Koi is the player's movement token and represents the player on the game board.

Your Koi is not placed on the board until the beginning of your first turn. When placing a Koi, it must be placed on an open space along the player's edge of the board (see above) – however, no player may begin the game in any of the six corner spaces (marked with X's above)

Be mindful of the hex side the Koi is facing when placing, moving or turning a Koi. A Koi is said to be facing the direction (hex side) the fish's head points to. This orientation is important during movement.



Deal each player a number of KOI cards as follows, starting with the First Player, and proceeding clockwise around the table:

1st & 2nd player: 4 cards / 3rd player: 5 cards / 4th player: 6 cards

These weighted hand sizes are only for the initial setup of the game.

Shuffle The Weather deck and deal six Weather cards face down to form the Weather row. Return the rest of the Weather cards to the box without looking at them.

Shuffle the KOI cards and place them face down near the game board to form the KOI deck. Leave room for a discard pile beside the KOI deck.

Play Area:

Weather row



Discard



1st Player:
4 cards



First Player
token

2nd Player:
4 cards



Score track



Score tokens

Corner spaces may not be starting positions

Round Order:

For the FIRST DAY of play, skip to step 4. Thereafter, each day begins with step 1.

1. Reveal a Weather card from the Weather row. Read it aloud to all players and follow its instructions. The special rules shown are in effect for only a single Day. The effects are not cumulative.
2. Spawn Dragonflies on all empty Lily Pads. (NOTE: Lily Pads adjacent to Frogs do not spawn Dragonflies)
3. Deal 3 KOI cards to each player (unless instructed to do otherwise by the Weather card).
4. Starting with the First Player, each player takes their turn. Actions "a" and "b" below may be performed in any order, any number of times, until a player chooses to stop or run out of cards.
 - a. Play a KOI card and resolve it.
 - b. Cycle cards. Discard two or more KOI cards from your hand to the discard pile. Then draw that number of cards minus 1 from the KOI deck. *Example: discard 3, draw 2.* You may continue to play cards after this action.
 - c. Choose to end your turn. At the end of your turn, if you have more than 5 cards in your hand, you must discard down to a hand of 5 cards. (Your choice, not at random)
5. Check for a Flood. At the end of any player's turn, if there are no Dragonflies left on the board, a Flood occurs (see Flood Rules).
6. Play proceeds clockwise to the next player.
7. When all players have taken a turn, the Day ends. Players total their points for the Day, advance their score tokens, and return their accumulated Dragonflies and Frogs to the supply. (If the supply runs out, this can be done earlier.)
8. Pass the First Player token to the player with the lowest score. If there is a tie for lowest score, the First Player token moves clockwise from its current position to the first player among those tied for the lowest score.
9. Begin a new Day (repeat steps 1 through 7) until 7 days have been completed. (All Weather cards will have been used)
10. At the end of the 7th day, the game ends and the winner is the player with the most points.

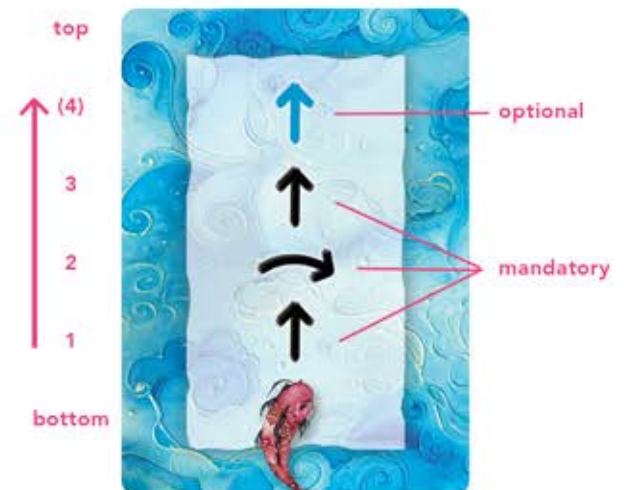
Koi cards:

There are two types of KOI cards: Movement cards (showing arrows), and Natural Beauty cards (showing either Rocks, a Frog, Lily Pad, or Cherry Blossom).

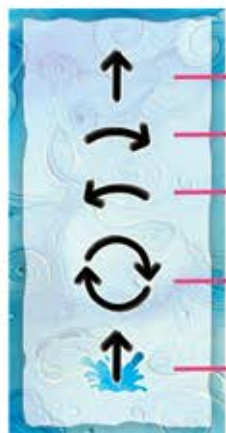
Movement cards:

Movement cards are used to move your Koi, to and fro, around the board. The goal is to play Movement cards so that your Koi lands on or passes through spaces containing Dragonflies (worth 3 points each) or Frogs (1 point each). Anytime this is achieved, the token is 'eaten' by the Koi. Remove the token from the board and place it in front of you.

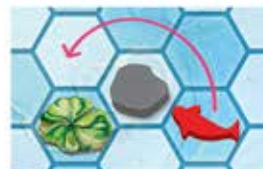
Movement cards are read from the bottom up, with each icon representing either a move forward or a turn. There are two types of arrows on Movement cards: black and blue. Black arrows are mandatory movements you **must** take, while Blue arrows are **optional** movements which may be taken or skipped. Regardless of color, the movements must be taken in the order shown, starting from the bottom-most icon. You may find the direction of your turn icons less confusing if you orient the card so that the fish drawing on the card is facing the same direction as your Koi token on the board.



Movement key:



- For each straight arrow, move forward 1 hex in the direction your Koi is facing.
- For each right arrow, rotate your Koi within the same hex it occupies, 1 hex facing clockwise.
- For each left arrow, rotate your Koi within the same hex it occupies, 1 hex facing counter-clockwise.
- For each circle symbol, rotate your Koi within the same space it occupies, to any hex facing.
- For each splash symbol, your Koi will jump over the next hex immediately in front of it. It will not interact with the jumped hex in anyway nor any token on it.



Remember: any **blue** movement symbol is optional, and may be used or ignored as desired.

Note: A Koi cannot move off the edge of the board or into a hex with a Rock. If a movement would casue a Koi to do so, ignore that icon and proceed to the next icon. A Rock may be jumped, as shown above.

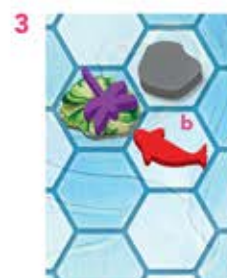
example:



Koi moves 1 hex forward, from a to b.



Koi tries to move 1 hex forward, from b to c, but bumps a Rock and ignores the move.



Koi rotates in place, counter clockwise.



Koi moves 1 hex forward, from b to d, and eats the Dragonfly.

Bumping other Koi:

Two Koi cannot occupy a single hex. If your Koi moves into a hex already occupied by an opponent's Koi, the opponent's Koi is forced out of the hex. The moving player places the opponent's Koi into any one of the surrounding hexes (except on Rocks), facing any direction they choose.

If this results in a bump with a third Koi, the **current player** may choose the destination hex and facing of the other fish as well.



Red Koi moves 2 hexes forward, from a to b, entering the hex of the Orange Koi and bumping it.



Red occupies the hex - and chooses any surrounding hex to place Orange into (c). Red also chooses to face Orange away from the Dragonfly.

Natural Beauty cards:

Playing a Natural Beauty card allows the player to place a token matching the icon shown onto the game board. Each has its own unique effects, as listed below.



Rocks

Place 2 Rocks onto open spaces on the board, one Rock per hex. Rocks cannot be placed adjacent to other Rocks.

Rocks do not move once placed and remain in play for the duration of the game.

Rocks are obstacles that block movement, preventing Koi from moving onto or through their hex (but may be jumped over).

(suggestion: beautify your board further by replacing the wood tokens with real pebbles.)



Lily Pads

Place 1 Lily Pad onto an open space on the board. Lily Pads cannot be placed adjacent to other Lily Pads. Once placed, Lily Pads do not move and remain in play for the duration of the game. Koi may occupy and swim through Lily Pad spaces.

Empty Lily Pads spawn Dragonflies at the start of each new Day and also after Floods (see Flood Rules). Lily Pads with Frogs adjacent to them do not spawn Dragonflies. Likewise, if a Koi occupies a Lily Pad space when Dragonflies would spawn, it does not spawn.

Dragonflies do not move after spawning unless acted upon by certain Weather cards or Cherry Blossoms. However, when Dragonflies move, their hex facing is ignored (unlike Koi and Frogs), as they are nimble enough to fly in any direction.



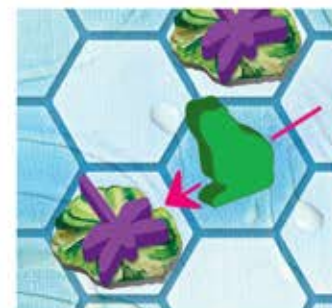
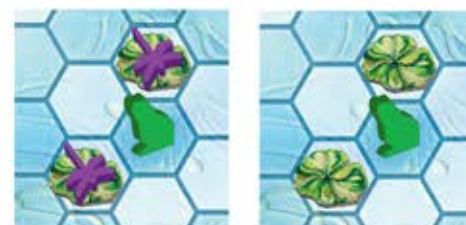
Frogs

Place 1 Frog onto an open space on the game board. Frogs have two important uses:

1. Frogs immediately eat any Dragonflies in the six adjacent hexes surrounding it, often depriving an opponent of a meal. Dragonflies eaten by Frogs are returned to the supply. Frogs always eat Dragonflies before any Koi would be able.
2. Frogs can be eaten by your Koi and are worth 1 point each. You may place a Frog in an open space, in such a way that you can make a quick meal of it.

Frogs do not move after placement unless acted upon by certain Weather cards or Cherry Blossoms. However, a Frog's hex facing is important. If placed on a board edge or corner, Frogs face the center hex of the board. If placed adjacent to Dragonflies, face them towards one of the Dragonflies they will eat as they are placed. Otherwise the player may choose the facing.

When moving, Frogs automatically jump Rocks and other Frogs if they would be moved onto their space. If moved onto a space containing a Koi, the owning player eats the Frog.



Place Frogs in 'standing' position. A Frog's Facing is shown like this.

Natural Beauty cards (cont.):



Cherry Blossoms

Place 1 Cherry Blossom onto an open space on the game board. When placed, Cherry Blossoms cause all tokens (except Lily Pads and Rocks) in the 6 adjacent hexes surrounding the space to move outward 1 hex away from the Blossom, like ripples on the pond. Anything moved this way maintains its Facing.



Board before placement.



Cherry Blossom placed in a hex space. All 6 hexes surrounding the blossom are impacted.



All surrounding tokens except Rocks and Lily Pads move away 1 hex. Orange Koi gets a free meal.

The player who played the Cherry Blossom moves the tokens, starting from the hex spaces surrounding the Cherry Blossom and moving outward. This can cause some interesting interactions and chain reactions as tokens bump into each other. Among the most important is the ability to move Dragonflies or Frogs into the hex your Koi occupies – or vice versa – which allows the Koi to eat them. The chart below details how to resolve each of the possible interactions.

Token	Bumps into Rock	Bumps into Koi	Bumps into Lily Pad	Bumps into Cherry Blossom	Bumps into Dragonfly
	Jumps the Rock	Gets eaten	Lands on Lily Pad, occupies same hex	Lands on Blossom, occupies same hex	Eats Dragonfly
	Jumps the Rock	Gets eaten	Lands on Lily Pad, occupies same hex	Lands on Blossom, occupies same hex	Pushes Dragonfly
	Does not move	Pushes Koi	Lands on Lily Pad, occupies same hex	Lands on Blossom, occupies same hex	Eats Dragonfly
	Does not move	Pushes Koi Will reactivate upon landing*.	Lands on Lily Pad Will reactivate upon landing*.	Pushes Blossom Will reactivate upon landing*.	Pushes Dragonfly Will reactivate upon landing*.

* **NOTE:** When a Cherry Blossom is moved by a Cherry Blossom, it is reactivated, as though it was just placed into the hex it now occupies. Resolve each Cherry Blossom to completion before the activation of another. Important: each Cherry Blossom can only activate once per turn, so chain reactions can occur from the placement of a Blossom, but each Blossom in the chain reaction will only activate once.

Pro Tip: Because Frogs and Dragonflies jump rocks when they move, a player can use a well placed Rock to float Dragonflies/Frogs an extra space closer to your Koi when you drop your Cherry Blossom – a tricky combo!

Flood Rules:

A Flood is nature's way of restoring balance, which is to say that it resets the game board. A Flood occurs at the end of a player's turn during which the last Dragonfly was removed from the board. This occurs before the next player starts their turn, even if that player is the last player in the Round. A Flood may also be caused by a Weather card even if Dragonflies are present.

When a Flood occurs, follow these steps:

1. Remove all Cherry Blossoms and Frogs from the board, placing them back into the supply. Leave all Rocks, Lily Pads, and Dragonflies in their current hex spaces.
2. Then, the Flood pushes all Koi to the outer edges of the pond.
Starting with the First Player for that Day (rather than the active player), each player places their Koi in any hex space along the nearest edge of the board in relation to the current position of their Koi token. Corner hexes are legal spaces during a Flood – and if a Dragonfly occupies the space you move into, the player may eat it. You may face your Koi to any hex side you choose. If a Koi is an equal distance to more than one board edge, the player may choose any of the tied edges.

In the example to the right, the White Koi is closest to the left edge, and may choose any of the hexes dotted white. The Orange Koi is equally close to two different edges and may choose any hex dotted in Orange. The Red Koi is equally close to all sides, and may choose any of the outer edge hexes.

3. Lastly, spawn Dragonflies on any empty Lily Pads.

Once completed, the Flood is over and the next player may take their turn.



Wind token:

Most of the Weather cards are self explanatory, but "Windy" deserves a special mention. When this Weather card is revealed, select one of the two Wind tokens, at random, by palming one in each hand and having another player choose one. This token will either show a "1" or a "2" on it, indicating the strength of the wind today. Flip the selected token, end over end, onto the the board - and place it into the closest hex, rotating it slightly so the token edges align with the hex grid. This is the direction Dragononflies and Cherry Blossoms will move, with the number determining how many hexes they will move. Remember, Cherry Blossoms will activate as they land, but only one time each. Note: If Wind or a Cherry Blossom moves a Dragonfly, Frog, or Cherry Blossom beyond the edge of the board, place that token back in the supply.

End of the Game:

Once the last player finishes their turn on the 7th Day, the game ends. Whomever has the most points wins.

After all, a Koi must be well fed and tenacious if they hope to one day swim upstream and climb a waterfall to the Dragon's Gate. For there, it is said, that one's inner strength shall transform a Koi into a mighty golden dragon, the very symbol of strength, perseverance, and a destiny fulfilled.

Tie breakers

If there is a tie, the win goes to whomever has the most KOI cards left in their hand.

If there is still a tie, the win goes to the Koi closest to the center of the board.

If there is still somehow a tie, share in the victory of a seriously well-played game.

Variant Play:

Short game: You can play a shorter game by only playing 4 Days (rounds).

Weather Forecasting: Weather cards are revealed a day in advance in this variant. So the game begins with the first card of the Weather row face up. Everyone will now know what the weather will be like on the next day, allowing for better turn planning and deeper strategy, but it tends to add ~15 minutes to gameplay. It is recommended to use one of the game tokens to mark the Weather card in current use for the Day, so as not to confuse players.

Solo Play:

KOI can be played as a solo game facing an automated opponent who we'll call, "Ryu" (mighty as a dragon). The difficulty can be adjusted to provide more or less of a challenge.

Use the 2-player setup with the following changes:

Ryu will always start in the center hex of Player 2's edge, facing one of the outer Lily Pads, as shown.

You will always be the First Player and Ryu second, every Round. Begin with a 4-card hand of KOI cards per the standard rules.

Only certain Weather cards are intended for use in Solo Mode. They are marked with a "1" in the lower right corner of the Weather cards. Place any Weather cards without this marking back into the box.



Shuffle the remaining Weather cards and deal 6 cards face down to create the Weather row. Return the rest of the cards to the box.

Each Day, after the Weather card is resolved, deal yourself three KOI cards and play as normal.

Ryu does not have a hand of KOI cards. On Ryu's turn, play from the top of the KOI deck a number of cards based on the difficulty you choose. Draw these cards one at a time, resolving each immediately.

Normal – play 4 cards / Hard – play 5 cards / Expert – play 4 cards (+ extra moves) / Dragon Challenge – play 5 cards (+ extra moves)

The KOI cards for Ryu resolve as follows:

For Movement cards drawn on Ryu's turn:

Any turn including a full circle: face Ryu toward the nearest Dragonfly or Frog (ties face the Dragonfly) with the preference being for the one in a straight line (ignore any Rocks in the calculation of distance). If there are two or more likely choices, you choose the direction.

Any straight arrow: Moves Ryu forward 1 hex (for Normal and Hard difficulty) OR moves Ryu forward 2 hexes (for Expert or Dragon Challenge difficulty). If Ryu ends a movement facing an adjacent Rock, it jumps the Rock immediately as a free move.

If Ryu bumps you, it places you behind it, facing your Koi the opposite direction that Ryu is moving.

Jump: Ryu performs a Jump as normal. If Ryu would land on a Rock or off the board, it skips this movement icon.

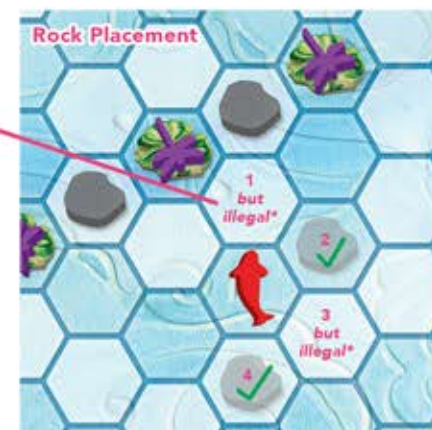
Edge Bouncing: If Ryu faces an outer edge and still has movement, it will turn and face the nearest Dragonfly/Frog and finish its remaining movement.

For Natural Beauty cards drawn on Ryu's turn:

Rocks: Place two Rocks in the first legal spaces available, starting with the hex directly in front of YOUR Koi and continuing in an ever expanding clockwise circle until both rocks are placed.

Cherry Blossoms: Place the Blossom in such a way that it pushes the nearest Dragonfly toward Ryu. If this is not possible, then in a way that pushes Ryu toward the nearest Dragonfly. Should this also not be possible, draw another KOI card to replace the Cherry Blossom.

Lily Pads: Place Lily Pads either directly in front of Ryu, or the first legal space found by circling around Ryu in an expanding clockwise circle.



*Rocks cannot be placed adjacent to other Rocks. Same for Lily Pads.

Solo Play:

For Natural Beauty cards drawn on Ryu's turn (cont):

Frogs: Place the Frog next to the Dragonfly nearest to YOUR Koi, so that the Frog will eat the Dragonfly. If there is a choice of hex spaces around that Dragonfly, choose the space farthest away from YOUR Koi - or the hardest hex of the six surrounding hexes for your Koi to navigate, if it were to try and eat the Frog.

If no spaces surrounding the Dragonfly nearest you are available, Ryu will eat it for free immediately without placing it.



The most difficult hex of 6.

Floods:

During a Flood, Ryu will always be placed on the nearest edge on a hex that is closest to and facing the nearest Dragonfly/Frog (ties face the Dragonfly). If there is a still a tie, the player decides.

For Rocks played on YOUR turn:

Instead of placing two Rocks, simply move one rock on the board to any other legal location.

Once you master a level, increase the difficulty until you become a dragon.

Credits:

KOI S&D 1003

Game Design: Bill Lasek

Illustrated by: Christy Freeman

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Special Thanks from Bill: "I would like to thank my wife, Jennifer, for her understanding and support of the countless hours that went into designing this game and its play testing. Special thanks to Alf Fischer, Matthias Bonnici, and Doug Levandowski for their dedicated time play testing and great advice, as well as Dave Beever for his help with the solo mode. I also want to thank Josh Hollifield, Shaun McNulty, Nicholas Greder, Gina Giacobbe, Rob Latherow, Celia Griepentrog, and the countless others who helped me test, retest, and test this game again until it was perfect. Finally, thanks to all of you who purchased this game. It was made with the sole intention of creating memories that will long outlast play sessions. Thank you so much for your support and happy gaming!"

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Round Order



For the FIRST DAY of play, skip to step 4. Thereafter, each day begins with step 1.

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You may continue to play cards after this action.
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5. Check for a Flood. At the end of any player's turn, if there are no Dragonflies left on the board, a Flood occurs (see Flood Rules).
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8. Pass the First Player token to the player with the lowest score. Should there be a tie for lowest score, the First Player token moves clockwise, from its current position, to the first player among those tied for the lowest score.
9. Begin a new Day (repeat steps 1 through 7) until 7 days have been completed.
10. At the end of the 7th day, the game ends and the winner is the player with the most points.

