

Tabula

1. The game was played on a board of twenty-four points by two players, each having fifteen pieces of a distinguishing colour.
2. The moves of the pieces were controlled by the alternate throws of three six-sided dice. If, for example, the numbers 1, 3, 5, were thrown:
 - (a) Three pieces could be moved, one 1 point, one 3 points, and one 5 points, as long as each resting point was not blocked by enemy pieces; or
 - (b) two pieces could move, e.g. one piece by 1 point, and the other piece by 3 plus 5, or 5 plus 3, or any other combination desired; or
 - (c) one piece could move 9 points if each resting place were free, i.e. 1 plus 3 plus 5, or any reorientation of these numbers, e.g. 5 plus 1 plus 3.
3. The pieces were entered on the board in the first quarter and travelled anti-clockwise round the track. Apparently both colours travelled in the same direction, and it improves the game if no piece is allowed to enter the second half of the board until all the player's pieces are entered into the first half.
4. If a player had two or more men on a point, this point became closed to the enemy and the pieces on it could not be captured. They were called Piled Men or Ordinarii.
5. If a player moved a piece on to a point occupied by an enemy singleton, the latter was sent off the board and had to re-enter the game at the next possible throw. Probably no other piece could be moved until it was re-entered. Singletons were known as Vagi.
6. Pieces unable to move because they were blocked by enemy Ordinarii were known as Inciti. A player was forced to use the whole of his throw if this was possible even if, as happened to the unfortunate Emperor Zeno, it was to the player's disadvantage: any part of a throw, however, which was unplayable was lost and the turn passed to his opponent.
7. An additional rule not mentioned by classical writers which improves the game is that no piece may be borne off the board until all the player's pieces have entered the last quarter. If a player starts bearing off and a vagus is hit, no further pieces can be borne off until it has re-entered the final quarter again.

Page 2 & 3. Printable Tabula Boards.

Page 4. Printable Counters and Spinner Dice. Stick to card and cut out. Insert a small pointed stick or small pencil through the centre of the dice. (If one can find three old dice, and items to use as counters like buttons or coins etc, then this will save time. 15 counters each are needed whereby both players can distinguish between each set.)

XIV

XXIII

XXII

XXI

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XIX

XVIII

XVII

XVI

XV

XIV

XIII

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III

IV

V

VI

VII

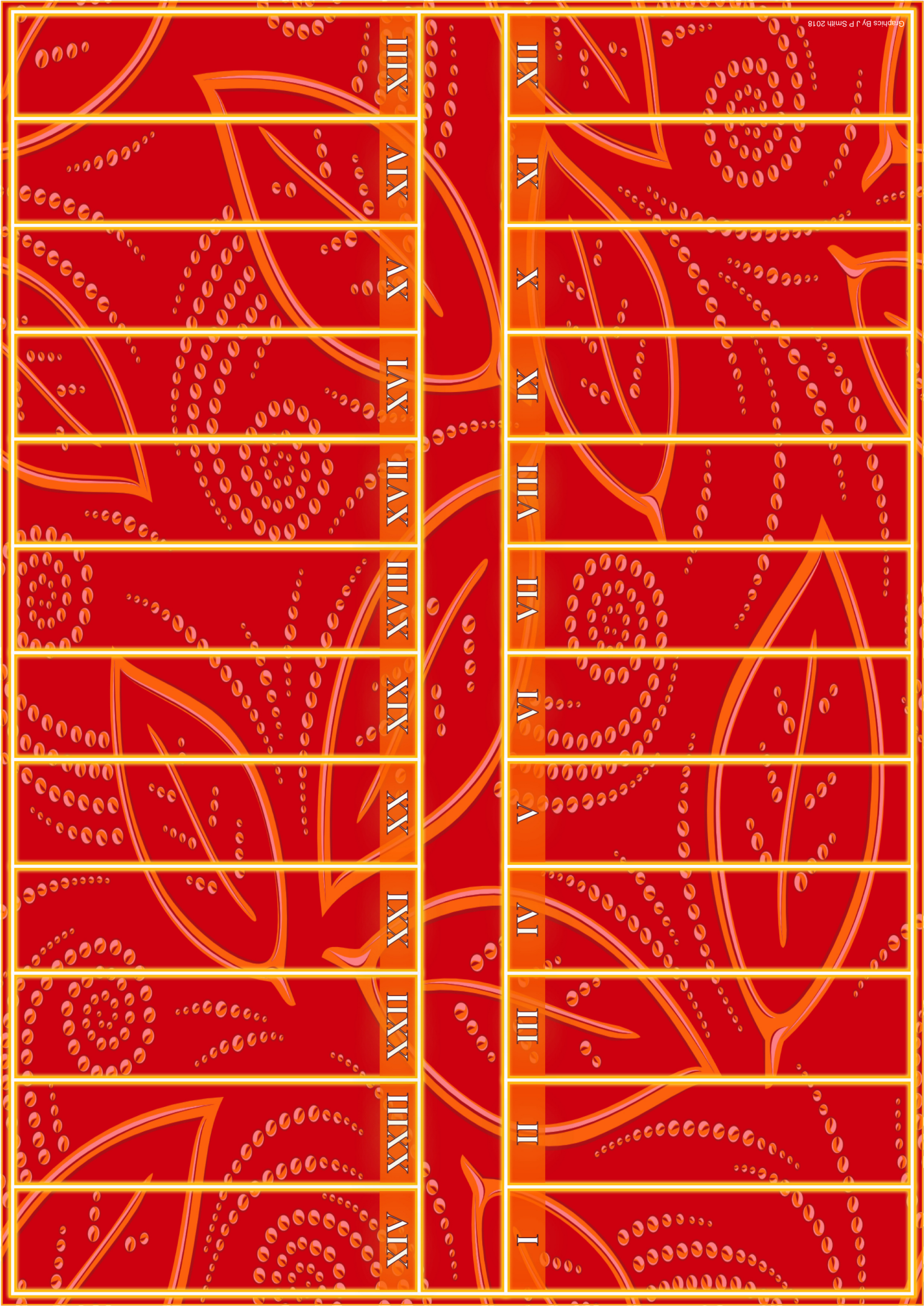
VIII

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