



**BIG  
HUGE**  
GAMES

# RISE OF NATIONS

**Microsoft**  
game studios

# RISE OF NATIONS: EXTENDED EDITION

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CIS 587

# RISE OF NATIONS

Historical Real-Time Strategy, with turn-based elements

Developed by Big Huge Games (2003)

Extended Edition by SkyBox Labs (2014)

Price: \$20 on Steam (regular Steam installation)

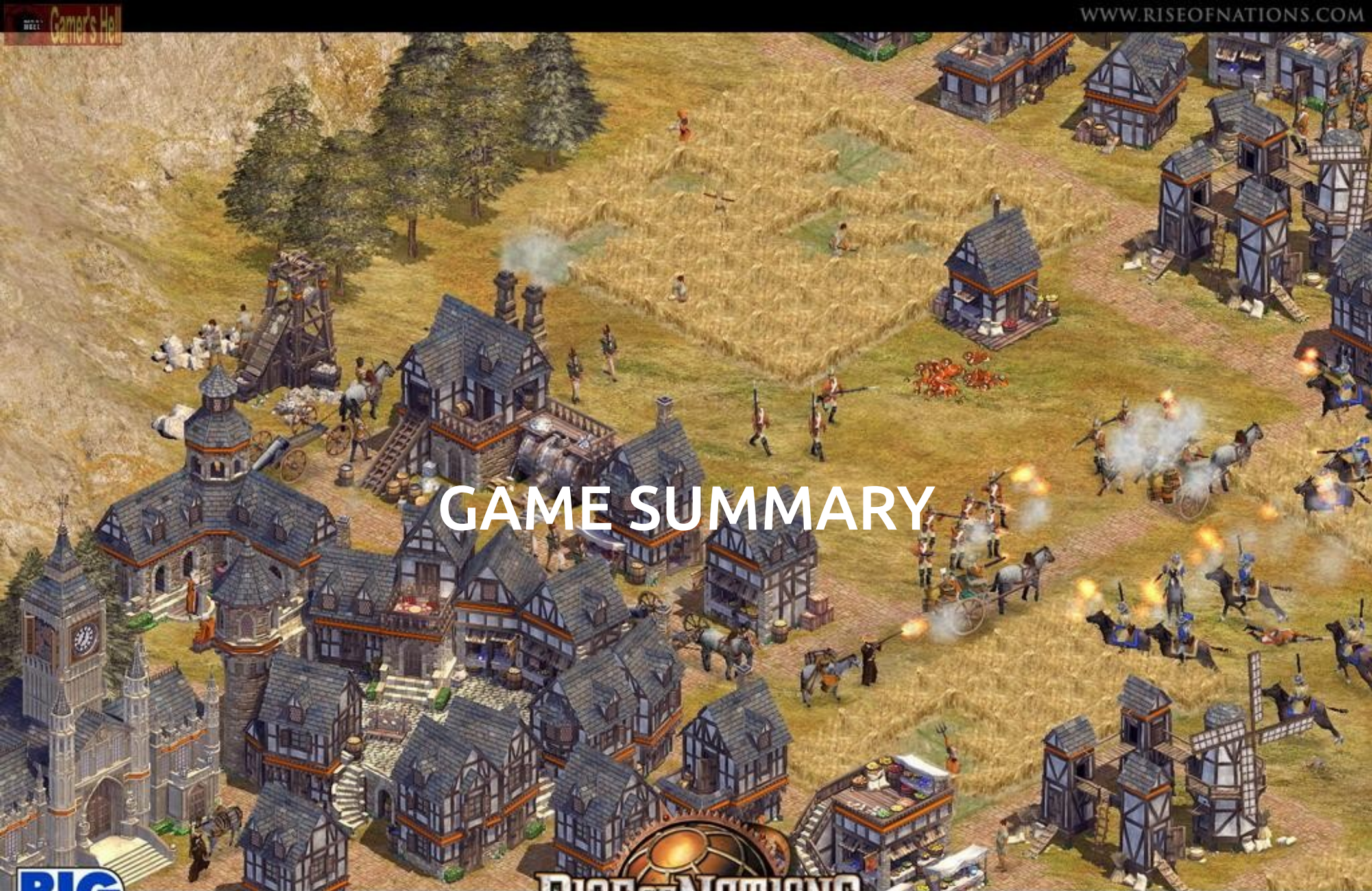
# HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

## Minimum

- Windows Vista, 7, 8.1+
- 1.6 GHz processor
- 1 GB RAM
- DirectX 10
- 3GB hard drive space
- Graphics Card

## Recommended

- Windows 7, 8.1+
- 2.6 GHz processor
- 4 GB RAM
- DirectX 11+
- 5 GB hard drive space
- GeForce 9800 GTX, Radeon 4850+



# GAME SUMMARY

# TYPES OF PLAY

Single-player Quick Battle

Multiplayer Quick Battle

Conquer the World campaigns

- Turn-based (like Risk), but fight battles in real time

+200

- 1187 / +220
- 2269 / +160
- 781 / +200
- 2256 / +70
- 891 / +78
- 780 / +70

Armageddon: 17



Queen Mary (British): Withdraw all offers. Tank created.

King Taharka	VII 26%	7502	WW	WW
Shogun Ieyasu Tokugawa	VII 34%	7243	WPW	W
Bartus	VII 14%	4797	P	WPP
Queen Mary	VII 16%	4062	P	WPP
Emperor Wu Di	VII 34%	3835	P	W

Forest  
Build a Woodcutter's Camp nearby to gather Timber.

Normal: 00:27:37

Unit and ability icons grid:

- Red flag, Red sword, Red house, Blue shield, Red ring
- Explosion, Red dragon, Red figure, Green figure
- Red shield, Red figure, Red figure, Skull



Right-side UI elements:

- Unit icons (soldier, tank)
- Icons for actions (crossed swords, crossed axes, trophy, hand)

# GAMEPLAY OVERVIEW

## Gather Resources

- Food, Lumber, Wealth, Metal, Oil, Knowledge

## Build cities & buildings; train units

- Expand territory with Cities, Forts, Temples, and tech

## Research technology

## Conquer the enemy!



# FEATURES

Rare Resources

Dynamic Territory

Nation Powers and Unique Units

Micromanagement Reduction

Conquer the World Campaigns

# GATHER RESOURCES

## Six Standard Resources

- Food, Lumber, Metal, Oil, Wealth, Knowledge
- Commerce limit on production
- NOTE: Their sources are unlimited!

## Rare (also called strategic) Resources

- Ex: Silver, Horses, Whales, Aluminum, Grapes, Uranium
- Provide an income in one or two resources, and a special benefit

# BUILD & EXPAND

Expand territory with Cities, Forts, Temples, and technology

- Enemies in your territory take attrition damage
- You can only build in your territory (usually)

Three kinds of buildings

- Economic buildings must be in a city, and provide various benefits
- Military buildings produce units or provide defense
- Wonders give special bonuses, but only one of each can be built

# RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY

## Library Technologies

- Military increases population limit, unlocks military improvements
- Civic increases city limit, expands national borders
- Commerce increases commerce limit and caravan limit
- Science makes all technology cheaper, and has miscellaneous benefits

## Minor Technologies

# ADVANCE THROUGH HISTORY

Eight Ages: Ancient, Classical, Medieval, Gunpowder,  
Enlightenment, Industrial, Modern, Information

Each one unlocks better units, wonders, & technology

# CONQUER THE ENEMY!

Units have balanced strengths and weaknesses

- Ex: Heavy infantry are strong against heavy cavalry, but weak against archers

Capture enemy cities to claim their buildings

Eliminate enemies by capturing (and holding) their capital

# SCORING AND VICTORY

Several options for victory conditions

- Conquest, Territory, Score, Wonders
- Some scenarios have special conditions

# CONQUER THE WORLD CAMPAIGNS

Map is made up of territories

- Territory strength determines defenses
- Some contain Rare Resources, others have bonuses
- In battle, each territory is a single map

Armies are used to capture territories

Bonus Cards, Wonders, Tribute, Rare Resources





Using your talents for diplomacy, leadership, and war, you must rule the entire world.



### Next Turn

#### Bonus Cards

Navigation icons: a trash can, a hand, a left arrow, and a right arrow.

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#### Rare Resources


#### Wonders


Lady Rameshai  
Romans  
Gunpowder Age  
3 turns before Age advance

Tribute  
25

Rare Resource Income

+0	+10	+0	+10	+0	+0

# BUGS

Errors in Control Groups

Inconsistencies with stated effects

- Ex: Attrition damages non-military units

Settings don't always work



# REVIEW

<W:4> Player1: 16% 2792  
Vogel: 0% 39



# GOOD POINTS

Consistent gameplay, regardless of current Age

- Tech tree remains roughly the same throughout
- Ex: In the Industrial Age, Stable becomes Auto Plant
- Library tech, Rare Resources provide continuity

# GOOD POINTS

Complex without being overwhelming

- Only six main resources
- Many advanced options are “optional” at lower difficulty levels

# GOOD POINTS

The artwork is beautiful and immersive

- Each regional style is unified and blends together
- Each type of building has a consistent appearance regardless of style



# GOOD POINTS

Age Advancement is handled better than other RTS games

- Earlier ages actually have interesting gameplay
- They aren't treated like second-class citizens
- (More on this later, though...)



# BAD POINTS

## Interminable End Game

- “So what now, Jack Sparrow? Will it be two immortals locked in an epic battle until Judgment Day and trumpets sound?”
- (Yes. Yes it will.)
- Unlimited resources and commerce caps make it difficult to win
- Late game becomes clash of unstoppable forces

# BAD POINTS

## Monotonous CTW campaigns

- No tactical difference between attacking and defending
- Even with overwhelming force, still have to slog through battles
- Eventually feels like you're fighting the same battle over and over again
- (Sometimes you are)

# BAD POINTS

## Lack of variety in the artwork

- Ancient Greece and medieval London look identical...
- Clashes with the attention to detail in the artwork that does exist

# BAD POINTS

Military is about the only good option for victory

- The other ways to win, but they aren't very fleshed out
- Territory or Score victories, for example, feel hollow

# BAD POINTS

## Age Advancement pace is unbalanced

- Rush through the first few ages and spend forever in the last
- Technology slows as the game progresses – the *opposite* of how history actually goes!
- This is a hallmark of the genre, and I don't like it



# SUMMARY



# AUDIENCE

Developer says it's good for casual gamers

Many reviewers say it's only for serious gamers

I say it's good for both!

- Wide range of difficulty levels makes it adjustable

# DESIGN MISTAKES

Many of the bad points are design mistakes

- Interminable end-game is caused by unlimited resources combined with commerce caps
- Conquer the World campaigns feel like an afterthought
- Age advancement could have been slowed in the earlier ages



# SUMMARY

## Overall strengths

- Standardized, flexible system
- Detailed & immersive artwork

## Overall weaknesses

- Lack of variety
- Poorly balanced (perhaps due to insufficient play-testing?)

THE VERDICT: It's worth it, but don't be surprised by the flaws

# POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

## More variety in artwork

- Change styles every Age instead of every three

## Improve focus on CTW campaigns

- More interesting terrain would help, though this applies to the whole game
- Armies take damage from battles

## Balance the endgame

- No unlimited resources – some would be renewable

## Slow down early Age advancement