



HNEFATAFL

Steam Workshop Uploader
Boards & Pieces

This tool is used to upload customized boards and pieces to the Steam Workshop in order to share them with the community.

Such a modification can include new boards, new pieces or both in one mod.

In the game's directories there is a folder called *Hnefatafl_Data\mods\gfx* where a template can be found. It includes sample images for boards and pieces as well as a configuration file which can be build upon.

Creating a copy of this template folder should always be the first step for the creation of a new modification.

If the Uploader doesn't start when using Windows try installing the following redistributable `dotnet-runtime-3.1.4-win-x64.exe` which can be found in the `redist` folder of the Uploader.



HNEFATAFL

Steam Workshop Uploader
Boards & Pieces

Creating custom Boards

When creating custom board images there have to be at least boards for all available sizes. This means boards of the following sizes:

- 7x7
- 9x9
- 11x11
- 13x13
- 15x15
- 17x17
- 19x19

Board images need to have a size of at least 1024x1024 pixels which are divided into tiles with the same size each. Each board needs to have a border with the width of one tile. This means a board with 7x7 tiles needs to get separated into a 9x9 grid whereas the outer tiles are the border where the annotations in the game will be drawn.

For the selection in the game a preview board should also be generated which shows the overall appearance of the board. This can also just show a part of the board if desired.

Additional boards can be added to the mod for different rules. There are four different configurations of each board: with or without a throne and with edge or border escape. For the 19x19 variant an extra board for those variants with big corners (2x2 tiles) can be created.

If no specific board is defined the mandatory default/fallback board will be used.

So a minimum of 7 boards is required with a maximum of 29 boards.

Once the images have been created the configuration file has to be written. For the format of that one see below.



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Boards & Pieces

Custom Tiles

Some variants use special tiles like Basecamps and Corners. To mark these usually a colored square is displayed on the board at their positions.

The color of those square can be changed in the “tiles” segment of the “boards” part (see the example following on the next pages). This color uses the HTML notation, allowing for any RGB and alpha value (#FFFFFF represents a solid white).

Instead of drawing the default square another image can also be shown by adding the according filename. It will be tinted in the given color.

The key names are:

- basecampColor** – the RGB value of the image/square
- basecampImage** – the image to show at basecamp tiles
- cornerColor**
- cornerImage** – the image to show at corners
- throneColor**
- throneImage** – the image to show at the throne

Those are all optional and without those the default values will be used.

If the “tiles” part is missing from the configuration file the default values will also be used. Basecamps are the only tiles that are always marked, even if not defined.



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Boards & Pieces

Creating custom Pieces

When creating custom images for pieces there have to images for all of those:

- **White Defender**
- **Black Attacker**
- **White King**
- **White Knight**
- **Black Commander**
- **White Guard**
- **White Variegated Man**
- **Black Variegated Man**

These images shall have a size of at least 216x216 pixels.

A preview image can also be created. Instead one of the images of the pieces can be used for that.



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Boards & Pieces

Creating the Configuration File

Each modification requires a configuration file which will tell the game what to expect. The file is called *config.json* and uses the human readable JSON format.

```
{
  "name" : "Example Board",
  "preview" : "example_board_11x11.png",
  "boards" : {
    "preview" : "example_board_11x11.png",
    "tiles" : { "basecampColor" : "#FFFFFFF50",
      "basecampImage" : "example_basecamp.png" },
    "size7x7" : { "fallback" : "example_board_7x7.png" },
    "size9x9" : { "fallback" : "example_board_9x9.png" },
    "size11x11" : { "fallback" : "example_board_11x11.png" },
    "size13x13" : { "fallback" : "example_board_13x13.png" },
    "size15x15" : { "fallback" : "example_board_15x15.png" },
    "size17x17" : { "fallback" : "example_board_17x17.png" },
    "size19x19" : { "fallback" : "example_board_19x19.png",
      "no_throne_corners" : "example_board_19x19.png",
      "no_throne_edge" : "example_board_19x19.png",
      "throne_corners" : "example_board_19x19.png",
      "throne_edge" : "example_board_19x19.png",
      "big_corners" : "example_board_19x19.png"
    }
  },
  "pieces" :{
    "preview" : "king.png",
    "king" : "king.png",
    "white" : "white.png",
    "black" : "black.png",
    "guard" : "guard.png",
    "commander" : "commander.png",
    "knight" : "knight.png",
    "variegated_black" : "black_var.png",
    "variegated_white" : "white_var.png"
  }
}
```

Depending on what the modification includes you need to add the *boards* or *pieces* section. If it supports custom board images it needs the *boards* section with the *preview* which will be shown in the settings menu of the game and entries for each board size. Each of the board sizes requires at least the *fallback* entry which will be used if specific board images are not available. Those are *no_throne_corners*, *no_throne_edge*, *throne_corners* and *throne_edge*.

If the modification includes custom pieces the *pieces* section is required. The *preview* image will be shown in the selection menu in the game whereas the other entries shall point to the images which shall be used for the pieces.

To test if the created configuration file is a valid JSON file it can be opened with a browser which will report any syntax errors.



HNEFATAFL

Steam Workshop Uploader
Boards & Pieces

Testing the Modification

Once a new modification has been created and the configuration file written it can be tested before uploading it to the Steam Workshop. Every folder (besides the template folder) that includes a valid *config.json* and is placed in the game's modification folder will be automatically available within the game (upon restart).

If the custom pieces or boards are not available the configuration file might have a syntax error or the directory has been misplaced.

Once a new board has been selected it might be possible that pieces are positioned wrongly upon it. There are two causes for that: The size of the board images is not 1024x1024 or it does not adhere to the grid rules of having a border with the width of one tile (see above).



HNEFATAFL

Steam Workshop Uploader
Boards & Pieces

Uploading to the Workshop

Once the Modification has been successfully tested it is almost ready to be uploaded to the Workshop and shared with the world.

These are the additional steps required:

The modification folder has to be copied to the directory of this Uploader.

A preview image with a size of at least 360x360 pixels and a maximum size of 1MB has to be created. This image will be shown within the Workshop, not within the game itself. It has to be named *preview.png* and has to be placed within the modification's folder (alongside the other images).

Additionally a configuration file for the modification is required that is placed alongside the Uploader with the same name as the directory of the mod and the ending *.mod*. If your modification's directory name is *"wooden_board"* then the configuration file's name has to be *"wooden_board.mod"*.

This file, which is a simple text file and can be created with any simple text editor, shall have three entries. For example it should look like this:

```
0
Wooden Board
These battle worn boards have seen a lot of action and have
traveled the known world.
```

The first row is the publishing ID of the item and will be replaced once the item has been uploaded and is required for later updates of the item and shall not be changed manually. Set it to 0 for new items.

The second line is the name of the item as it will be displayed within the Workshop.

The rest of the text file will be the description of the modification.

Once this file has been created it is time to start the Workshop Uploader. It is a terminal application without a graphical user interface as it is a simple tool.

It will check the current directory for modifications and list all errors it may encounter. Afterwards a list of all found modifications will be shown with a number next to it. Upon entering the number of the desired action the Modification will be prepared for upload.



HNEFATAFL

Steam Workshop Uploader
Boards & Pieces

For each upload a change comment (which is visible to the public) has to be entered. Afterwards the modification will be uploaded to the server and be available within a few minutes.

If at any time a modification has to be changed (new graphics, texts etc.) the files within the modification's folder just need to be replaced and the Uploader called again. Instead of creating a new modification it will offer to update the old one.

Uploaded modifications can then be subscribed as usual within the Community Browser of Steam. Subscribed mods will be downloaded automatically and be recognized by the game upon startup.

Thank you for being an awesome part of this fantastic community and sharing your creative work with others!

