Colony command guide

VERSION 1.6.0



ONE HUMAN SETTLER / THREE COMPUTER RIVALS / SIX OR TWELVE MONTHS

1. Start, continue, or pause

Choose **Start new charter** to set up your settler, computer skills, charter length and market style. **Continue charter** loads the saved game in this browser. During play, **Return to cover** pauses computer turns and live trading; Continue resumes the charter.

2. Keep your own economy in view

The dashboard shows cash, net worth and resources. Its forecasts account for the current phase, and the colony goal shows progress toward the final survival target. Forecasts are estimates: events, production variation and power shortages still matter.

3. Select a plot before committing

Select a free plot, compare its information, then choose **Claim selected plot - free**. The selection stays visible when you move to the controls. Compare Food, Energy, Smithore or Crystite yield layers, or use **My claims**. Unassayed crystite remains unknown.

4. Plan the whole dray installation

Select an **empty plot you own**. The planner shows the complete cash cost, time cost, estimated yield and power warning before **Deploy** buys, outfits and installs a dray. It uses normal game costs and checks the whole operation before committing. Manual buy/outfit controls remain available; carried drays use the selected plot's **Install carried dray** action. With no dray following, use **Survey selected plot** to assay unknown crystite.

POWER COMES FROM STOCK. Non-energy drays burn stored energy at production. Energy made in that same harvest cannot power them. Check the forecast before adding another food or mining dray.

Trade, save, continue

Trade with tomorrow's reserves in mind

On the live floor, **Buy shortfall** and **Sell surplus** provide starting quantities based on your reserves. Review the estimated spend and remaining supplies, then adjust the units if you wish. The price buttons and keyboard controls change your offer; a visible countdown shows the time remaining. Actual prices and available stock can differ from the estimate.

In quick sealed orders, choose a side, quantity and limit price for each good; Buy shortfalls and Sell surplus fill starting orders. Crystite is an export: the depot buys it but does not sell it. Smithore keeps drays available because each new dray needs two units.

Keep a usable copy of your charter

ACTION	WHAT IT DOES
Autosave	Actions save to this browser; live auctions are checkpointed periodically. Pending orders and land bids are included. The save indicator reports storage errors.
Export saved charter	Download a JSON charter backup. Keep the file separately if you want a copy outside browser storage.
Restore from the cover	Choose Restore a saved charter, select a backup and review its preview. Restore charter confirms replacement. Cancel the preview to keep the current charter.
Start again safely	Opening setup does not overwrite your charter. Back or Esc cancels; Land the colony commits a new game and replaces the current browser save.

Autosaves do not sync between browsers or devices. To move a charter, move an exported JSON file yourself and restore it on the other device.

Useful controls

Map: drag to pan; wheel or pinch to zoom. Tab to the map, use arrows for its cursor, Enter to select, and Shift+arrows to pan. **Drays:** B buys; 1-4 outfits. **Turn:** P cashes out at the tap room; E ends the turn. **Trading:** up/down moves the price; focused price buttons accept Enter or Space. **Full screen:** use the game control; Esc leaves browser full screen.

ABOUT THE RULES PAGES THAT FOLLOW

The original eight-page version 1.4.0 core rules guide is preserved next. Its economy, costs and scoring still apply. This version 1.6 guide and the updated HTML tutorial replace its older instructions for launching, clicking to claim/install, trading controls and saving.

HOMESTAKE

Frontier economics on Vesh · Manual · version 1.4.0



Solo edition: one human settler against three computer settlers

Tronsoft Games · October 22, 2026

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1. Welcome to Vesh

Vesh is a newly chartered frontier world: a hex-mapped valley of river flats, open plains and mountains with one depot at its heart. Four settlers land with $1,000 each. You play one of them; the other three are computer settlers.

Goal: finish the charter as the richest settler. Your **worth** is your cash, plus $500 for every plot you hold, plus your drays at the depot's dray price, plus your stored goods at depot prices. The colony must also prosper: if the average settler's worth falls below the charter office's bar, the charter is revoked and nobody wins (section 11).

2. Starting a charter

The game opens on its setup sheet. Name your settler, and choose each computer settler's skill — Cadet, Staff, Ace (Staff is the default). Choose a **12-month** charter or a **6-month** short charter, and the market style: the live **trading floor** or quick **sealed orders**. A seed number fixes the map and events, so two games with the same seed start alike. Choose **Land the colony** to begin, or **Resume saved game** to continue one.

3. The screen



A development turn. Left: settlers, the depot, the colony outlook, fortunes, the plot under the pointer and the log. Centre: the map. Right: your controls and the advisor.

The **information panel** on the left lists every settler's cash, goods and worth (hover a name to light up that settler's plots), the depot's stock and prices, the colony's food and energy outlook, a month-by-month **fortunes** chart, details of the plot under your pointer, and the colony log. The **controls** on the right change with the phase. The version number sits beside the title.

4. A month on Vesh

Land grant

The poorest settler chooses first; everyone may claim one free plot. The depot hex cannot be claimed.

Land auction

Some months the charter office sells one more plot, and any plot a settler listed during the previous month goes up too. Bids are sealed; the highest bid at or above the reserve wins and pays the seller.

Development

The richest settler goes first. Each settler has 50 units of time if fed. Buy a dray (3 time), outfit it (3 time) and walk it to one of your plots. Survey plots for crystite, chase a skree, list a plot for sale, and cash leftover time at the tap room.

Production

Every dray produces by its terrain. A production event may strike (section 5).

Market

Smithore, crystite, food and energy are traded in turn on the trading floor (section 8).

Month end

Prices move with supply and demand; surplus beyond next month's need spoils; the depot forges new drays from smithore (section 10).

5. Drays and production

Dray	River flat	Plain	Mountain	Outfit cost
Food	4	2	1	$25
Energy	2	3	1	$50
Smithore	—	1	1 + one per peak	$75
Crystite	—	by the plot's hidden deposit, 0–3 (a meteor leaves 4)		$100

Bonuses: +1 for every three drays of one kind you own; +1 when one of your drays of the same kind works any of the six neighbouring plots; and each dray rolls ±1 by chance each month. **Power:** every non-energy dray burns one unit of energy at production; a dray without power produces nothing. Installing onto a plot that already has a dray swaps them, and the old dray follows you back.

Production events

- Blight: one food plot yields nothing this month.
- Solar flare: every energy dray yields one extra unit.
- Tremor: smithore yields are halved.
- Meteorite: strikes a plot (destroying any dray there) and leaves a rich crystite seam (level 4).
- Depot fire: the depot loses its food, energy and smithore stock.
- Cold snap: every food dray yields one unit less.
- Raiders (from month 4): every settler loses all stored crystite.

Settlers also meet personal fortunes at the start of a turn: windfalls for those behind, setbacks for the leader.

6. Food, time and the tap room

Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Food needed	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5

Food is eaten at the start of your development turn. A settler short of food gets less time — as little as 12 of 50. Walking from the depot costs 4 time plus 2 for every hex away. A dray still on its lead when

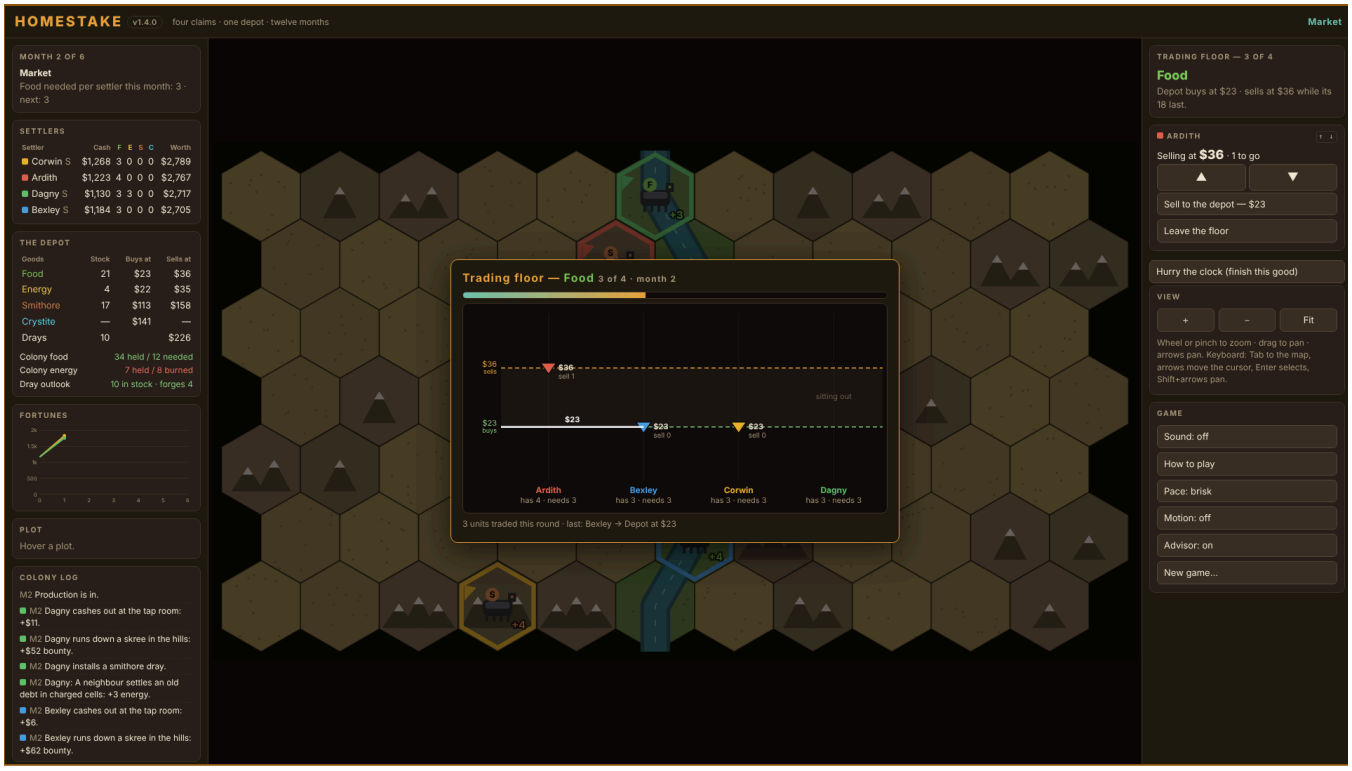
your time runs out wanders off and is lost. Time you do not spend can be cashed at the **tap room**; the payout grows through the charter.

7. Surveying, crystite and the skree

Crystite is the richest good on Vesh, and only an **assay** reveals a plot's deposit (0–3). Choose **Assay a plot** (A) and click any plot — yours or an open one — to walk there and survey it; the result is shown on the map to you alone. Crystite is shipped off-world: the depot buys it but never sells it, and its price is a fresh off-world quote each month.

A **skree** sometimes grazes on a bare mountain during development. Click it, with no dray on your lead, to walk out and run it down for a bounty that grows each month. It bolts whenever you buy, install or assay.

8. The trading floor



The trading floor for food. Each lane is a settler; triangles are their prices; the dashed lines are the depot's buying and selling prices.

Each good goes up in turn. First **declare**: buy, sell or sit out, and how many units. Then the clock runs. Sellers bring their prices down and buyers bring theirs up (↑/↓ or the arrow buttons; hold to repeat). When a buyer's price meets a seller's, one unit changes hands at the **seller's price**, and both rest a moment before the next. Reach the depot's **buys** line to sell to the depot; reach its **sells** line to buy from it while it has stock. **Sell to the depot** and **Buy from the depot** jump straight there; **Hurry the clock** finishes the good. Computer sellers come down toward the depot's price as the clock runs out; when a good is scarce they hold out longer.

> **Sealed orders** (chosen at setup) replace the floor with one form: for each good set buy, sell or hold, a quantity and a price limit. Orders that cross trade at the midpoint; the depot fills the rest at its prices.

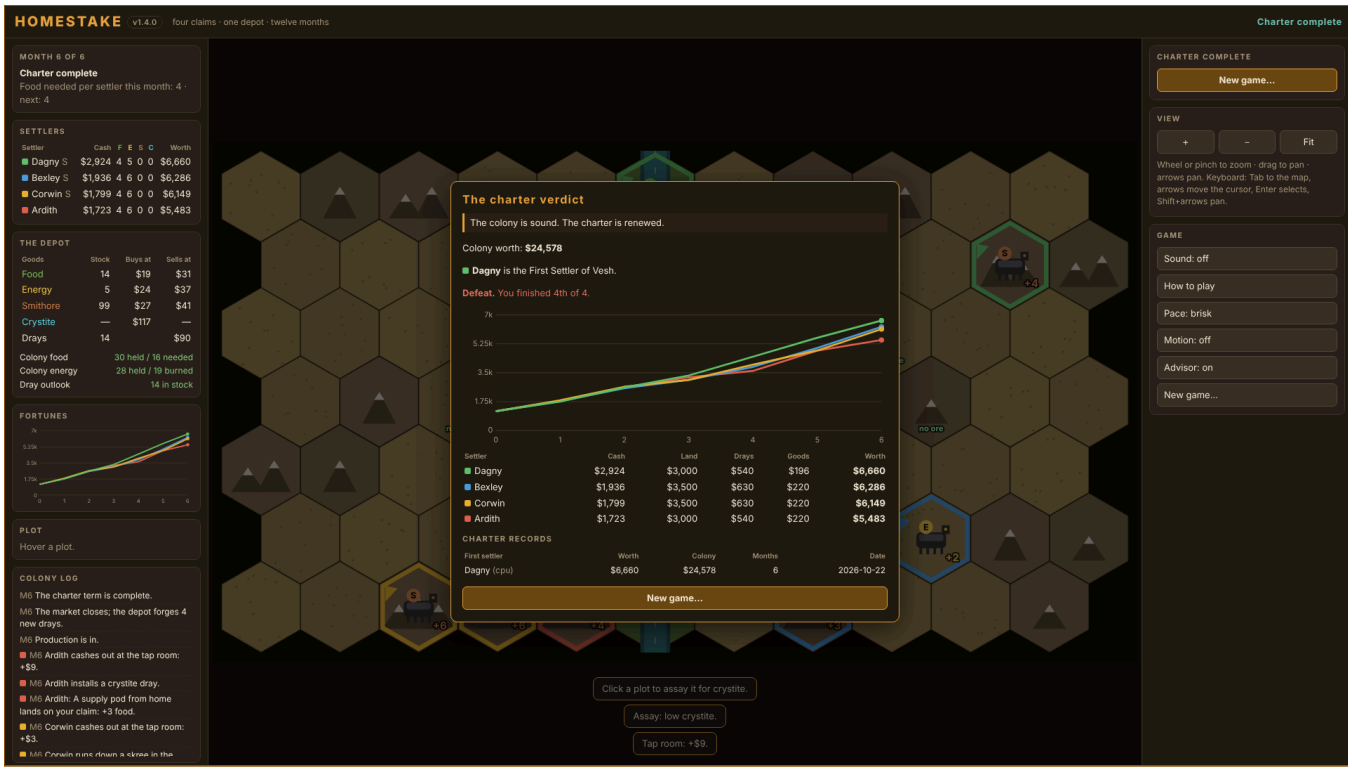
9. Land auctions and the land market

During your development turn you may list one of your plots — and any dray standing on it — for next month's land auction (L, set a reserve, click the plot). You keep working it until it sells. Bids are sealed; you cannot bid on your own lot; if no bid reaches your reserve, the plot stays yours. A listing cannot be made in the charter's last month. Computer settlers bid what a plot is worth to them: its $500 at the verdict plus part of what it can still earn.

10. Prices, spoilage and the depot

At month end food, energy and smithore prices move toward what supply and demand imply: scarce goods grow dear and gluts grow cheap. After the market, food beyond next month's need spoils by half, a quarter of surplus energy leaks away, and smithore stores cap at 50 — so sell surplus on the floor. The depot forges one dray from every two units of smithore it holds, up to 14; if nobody sells it smithore, drays run out and grow dear. The **colony outlook** in the left panel shows whether the colony holds enough food and energy.

11. The charter verdict



The verdict: the colony's rating, the First Settler, your result, the fortunes chart and the standings.

When the charter ends, the colony is rated by the average worth of its four settlers:

Rating	12-month charter	6-month charter	Verdict
Triumph	$17,500 or more	$7,350 or more	The colony is a triumph. Vesh will be a city within a generation.
Thriving	$16,100 or more	$6,762 or more	The colony is thriving. The charter is renewed with honours.
Sound	$13,800 or more	$5,796 or more	The colony is sound. The charter is renewed.
Survives	$10,900 or more	$4,578 or more	The colony survives, barely. The charter office is unimpressed.
Failed	below $10,900	below $4,578	The colony has failed. The charter is revoked and every claim is forfeit.

The richest settler is the **First Settler of Vesh**. If that is you the verdict shows **Victory**; otherwise **Defeat** and your place. If the colony fails, the charter is revoked, every claim is forfeit and nobody wins. Finished games are kept in the charter records.

12. Computer settlers and the advisor

The three computer settlers follow the same rules you do, play their turns in view, and differ by skill: **Cadet** plays loosely and never surveys; **Staff** plans around its food and power and surveys nearby land; **Ace** plans precisely, surveys widely and trades more sharply. In testing, Staff beats Cadet in about 96 games of 100 and Ace beats Staff in about 83.

The **advisor** card (it can be turned off) ranks open plots at the land grant (numbered on the map), forecasts your food and power, marks your best empty plot with ★, names plots worth surveying (?), and estimates what a land-auction lot is worth to you. A player who simply follows it wins most games against Staff opponents and about one in three against Ace — turn it off for the real challenge.

13. Controls

Action	Mouse or touch	Keyboard
Claim, install, assay, list, hunt	Click or tap the plot	Tab to the map; arrows move the cursor; Enter
Buy a dray / outfit it	Controls panel	B / 1–4
Assay · list a plot · tap room · end turn	Controls panel	A · L · P · E
Move your price on the floor	▲ ▼ buttons (hold)	↑ ↓
Zoom · fit · pan	Wheel or pinch · Fit · drag	+ − · 0 · arrows (Shift+arrows on the map)
Close How to play or the setup sheet	Close / Back to the game	Esc

Browser shortcuts with Ctrl, Cmd or Alt are left to the browser.

14. Saving, settings and accessibility

The game saves itself in this browser after every action and resumes from the setup sheet. Saves from earlier hot-seat releases resume with their first human settler; the other human seats are played by Staff computer settlers. **New game…** pauses the current game behind the setup sheet; **Back to the game** returns. The Game panel holds **Sound**, **Pace** (relaxed, normal, brisk), **Motion** (animations; off by default when your system asks for reduced motion) and the **Advisor**. Every control is reachable by keyboard, the map has a keyboard cursor, controls and the map carry screen-reader labels, and the layout adapts to phones and to browser zoom.

15. Credits and notices

Design direction and review: Calvin Robert Glomb. Design implementation, programming, documents and artwork: Claude (Anthropic), under his direction. All map art is drawn by the game's own code; all sound is synthesised at run time; no third-party code, fonts, images or audio are included.

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