**Kairos: The Time-Travel Game — Rulebook**

**1. Theme & Goal**

A rogue quantum A.I., **Kronos**, is warping history toward a bleak future. Players are time-agency commanders collaborating to:

* **Guard Artifacts** (to hinder Kronos),
* **Recover Crystals** (to uplift the Timeline and create **TimeLords**),
* **Restore Items** to their correct TimeLocations (to clear **Paradoxes**).

**How to Win**

At game end:

* If the **Main Timeline** (MTL) is **positive (>0)** and at least one player has **Blots = 0**, the player(s) with **0 Blots** and the **highest Kairos** win (ties: all tied players win).
* If the MTL is **zero**, all players share a victory.
* If the MTL is **negative (<0)**, **Kronos wins** and all players lose.

**2. Game Overview**

* **Players:** 1–4  **Age:** 15+  **Time:** 60–90 minutes
* **Style:** Semi-cooperative strategy with individual scoring (Kairos).
* **Round Structure:** Players take turns (clockwise). After all players act, resolve the **Kronos Phase**.

**3. Components**

* **Board** with: Central **TimeField** (hex grid), **Main Timeline Track**, **Paradox Track**, **Jail**, **Lost in Time**.
* **37 TimeLocation Hexes** (arranged in rings: 0–3).
* **Object Cards/Counters:** **Artifacts**, **Crystals**, **Items**.
* **Portal Deck:** 37 Time Portals (or matching your set).
* **Event Decks:** ~42 Portal Events; ~20 Recovery Events (KEEP/instant).
* **Dice:**
  + 5 **Time Dice** (R/B/G/Bl/W) + 1 **TimeLord die**
  + 5 **Recovery Dice** (R/B/G/Bl/W) + 1 **TimeLord die**
  + 2 × d6 (for various checks)
* **HQ Cards** (Blue/Green/Red/Purple), each with **Blot** and **Kairos** tracks, **Agent Pool**, **Training**, **TimeLord** slot.
* **Meeples:** 1 **TimeLord** + up to **12 Agents** per player.
* **Markers:** Blots (×4), Kairos (×4), MTL & Paradox markers, Guarded counters.
* **Start Player** token & this **Rulebook**.

**4. Setup**

**4.1 TimeField**

1. Place the board centrally.
2. Shuffle and randomly lay **37 TimeLocation hexes** into the TimeField (rings 0–3 per your map).
3. Place **Artifacts** and **Crystals** as indicated on their tiles. **Items** are placed at random **not** matching their correct TimeLocation.
4. Set **MTL marker** to **0**. Set **Paradox marker** per **Setup Table** (by player count).

**4.2 Players**

1. Choose colours; take the matching **HQ**, markers, and meeples.
2. From the **Setup Table**, place starting **Agents** into your **Agent Pool**; place **1 Rookie** on the **Training** track; place your **TimeLord** on its reserved slot (not in play).
3. Set starting **Blots** and **Kairos** per the **Setup Table**.

**4.3 Decks & Portals**

* Shuffle **Portal Deck**; reveal **N** active portals face-up (N per player count or scenario).
* Shuffle **Portal Event** and **Recovery Event** decks; place nearby.

**4.4 Start Player**

* Randomly, or the player who most recently experienced déjà vu.

**Note:** Any numbers referenced as “See Setup Table” are scenario/player-count dependent; keep them on your player aid.

**5. Turn Structure**

On your turn, **each of your Agents** (including any already in the TimeField) may perform **one** action (unless a card says otherwise). Resolve one Agent at a time.

**5.1 Actions**

1. **Time Travel (Portal Activation)**  
   Attempt to activate a **revealed** Portal and send an Agent to that TimeLocation (5.2). On arrival, you may attempt **Object Recovery** there (5.3).
2. **Move Agent (Future adjacency)**  
   If an Agent is in the **Future** (post-2038 AD), it may **move to one adjacent TimeLocation** (no Portal, adjacency only).

**Design note:** Timelords in the field also move by adjacency; **Portal jumps** originate from **HQ**.

1. **Recall Agent**  
   Return one Agent from the TimeField to your **Agent Pool** (HQ).
2. **Train Agent**  
   Advance your **Rookie** along the **Training** track. Upon completion, move it to the **Agent Pool**.
3. **Upgrade to TimeLord**  
   Whenever a **Crystal** is **deposited at your HQ**, the **delivering team is upgraded to TimeLord** (immediately).
4. **Release from Jail**  
   Spend **1 Blot** *or* use a suitable Event to move one of your Agents from **Jail** to your **Agent Pool**.
5. **Recover from Lost in Time**  
   Roll **2d6**. If **any double** is rolled, return that Agent to your **Agent Pool**. If a **Skull** result is ever directed (by card/effect), that Agent **dies** and is removed from the game.

**5.2 Time Portal Activation (from HQ)**

* **Where you can jump:**
  + **Non-Timelord at HQ:** must choose among **revealed active portals**.
  + **Timelord at HQ:** may target **any valid TimeLocation** (treat as a free-choice portal).
* **Difficulty / Requirement:** depends on **ring distance** (HQ counts as **Ring 4**, outer ring is **3**, then **2**, **1**, and **0** center). A typical mapping is:
  + To **Ring 3**: match faces **[1,2]**
  + To **Ring 2**: **[1,2,3]**
  + To **Ring 1**: **[1,2,3,4]**
  + To **Ring 0**: **[1,2,3,4,5]**  
    (Your Portal card or scenario may specify symbols instead—use those if present.)
* **Rolling:** Roll **5 Time Dice** (add the **TimeLord die** if the activating Agent is a TimeLord). You may re-roll, keeping any number of dice, up to a **total of 4 rolls**.
  + **Skulls** must be kept (locked).
  + If you ever have **2+ Skulls**, the activation **fails** → **draw a Portal Event** and resolve it.
  + If you complete the requirement, **place the Agent** on the destination **TimeLocation**. You may then attempt **Object Recovery** there (5.3).

**In-field movement (no Portal):** Agents already on a Future tile may move to an adjacent tile as their action (5.1.2).

**5.3 Object Recovery (at a TimeLocation)**

* **Choose one object** present at the Agent’s tile: **Artifact**, **Crystal**, or **Item**.
* Roll **5 Recovery Dice** (add **TimeLord die** if a TimeLord). Try to match the object’s **required symbols**.
* **$** on any die → **draw a Recovery Event** and resolve (KEEP cards stay with you).
* **Success outcomes:**
  + **Guard Artifact:** Place a **Guarded** counter on it; **reduce Blots** and **gain Kairos** as shown on the Artifact. A **Guarded** Artifact is much harder for Kronos to steal.
  + **Recover Crystal:** Take the Crystal with the team (respect carry limits). When the team returns it to **HQ**, immediately **upgrade** that team to **TimeLord**. **Crystals at HQ** contribute to pushing the MTL **positive** during the **Kronos Phase** (8).
  + **Recover Item:** The team carries the Item. If they later stand on that Item’s **correct TimeLocation**, the Item is **restored**:
    - **Reduce Paradox by 1**.
    - Apply the Item’s **Blot/Kairos** effects.
    - Place the Item at that TimeLocation as **restored**.

Teams have a carry capacity (per your player aid). If full, they cannot pick up more until they deposit/restore.

**6. Special Rules**

**6.1 TimeLords**

* **Cannot** be sent to **Jail** or **Lost in Time** by effects that target normal Agents.
* Still suffer **Portal Event** fallout on failed activations.
* Interact with **Blots**, **Kairos**, and scoring normally.

**6.2 Jail**

* Some Events send Agents to **Jail**. Release by spending **1 Blot** or using an appropriate Event.

**6.3 Lost in Time**

* Some Events displace Agents to **Lost in Time**. Recover with **2d6** (any **double** succeeds). If directed to **Skull** here, the Agent dies.

**7. Adjacency & Rings**

* The TimeField is a **hex grid**. **Adjacent** means the six neighbouring hexes.
* **Rings:**
  + **Ring 0** = centre,
  + **Ring 1** = next ring out,
  + **Ring 2**, **Ring 3** = outermost.
  + **HQ** is considered **Ring 4** for Portal distance.

**8. Kronos AI Phase (end of each round)**

After all players have taken a turn this round:

1. **Kronos Theft Attempts**  
   For **every Artifact** on the board, Kronos attempts to steal it:

* **Guarded** Artifact: Kronos steals on **6** (d6).
* **Protected** (a team is present at that tile): Kronos steals on **4–6**.
* **Unguarded & unprotected**: Kronos steals on **2–6**.  
  Stolen Artifacts are removed to Kronos’ inventory and count against the players.

1. **Shift the Main Timeline**

* Move the MTL **left (negative)** by **1** **for each Artifact** currently held by Kronos.
* Move the MTL **right (positive)** based on **Crystals stored at HQ** (use your scenario/aid value; a simple baseline is **+1 per Crystal**).

1. **Paradox**

* **Paradox increases** via Kronos’ manipulations (e.g., stolen Artifacts).
* **Paradox decreases** by **1** each time an **Item is restored** to its correct TimeLocation.

Adjust **Max Rounds** by Paradox per your scenario/aid (e.g., Start Max Rounds modified by Paradox cleared).

**9. Endgame**

The game ends immediately when **either**:

* A player achieves **Blots = 0** and the **MTL is positive** at the end of a round → compare **Kairos** among players with **0 Blots**; highest wins (ties share victory).
* The **Round number** reaches or exceeds **Max Rounds** (after any Paradox adjustment) → evaluate **MTL**:
  + **Negative**: Kronos wins (all players lose).
  + **Zero**: Shared victory (all players win).
  + **Positive**: Players with **0 Blots** compare **Kairos**; highest wins (ties share).

**10. Glossary (quick reference)**

* **Artifact**: Powerful relic in the past. Guarding it grants Blot/Kairos and resists Kronos theft.
* **Crystal**: Future-era object. Deliver to HQ to forge a **TimeLord** and push the MTL positive.
* **Item**: Displaced object. Once carried to its **correct** TimeLocation, it is **restored** (–Paradox, apply Blot/Kairos).
* **Guarded**: A marker on an Artifact; theft becomes much harder.
* **TimeLord**: Elite team unlocked by delivering a Crystal. At HQ they may target any TimeLocation for Portal jumps; in the field they move by adjacency like other Agents in the Future.