

# win

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DIE  
**SPEICHERSTADT**  
...so mok wi dat

**INTERNATIONAL EDITION: IN THIS ISSUE WE PRESENT 36 GAMES**



THE NEW ROAD TO INDIA

# VASCO DA GAMA

*Worker placement with time markers*



When Caylus by William Attia was published in 2005 the world of board games was enriched by a wonderful new mechanism. Each player has at his disposal a certain amount of workers which are placed on action areas to implement the action available there. As Caylus was a very well made game all around there really was nobody around involved in gaming who could ignore the new prodigy. Since then many games have been published who did take on the mechanism of worker placement. The common game geek quickly got used to it. No bigger display of interest than "oh, its worker placement again" is normally heard at the games table. Unless it is a game that is nearly perfect in total, as was Agricola, or something else is different or a new game offers an interesting variant of the worker placement mechanism. And thus we have arrived at Vasco da Gama.

Vasco da Gama was presented at the Essen Fair of 2009 by the Italian publisher What's Your Game?, and very successfully, too, because sold out very quickly. This fact made it easy to find a publisher for other language versions. Hutter Trade was successfully in

acquiring the rights for the German edition. Two to four players adopt the role of Portuguese explorers trying to find a new road to India.

Vasco da Gama is played in exactly five rounds which are segmented into several phases. The most interesting one of these

## Markus Wawra

*Vasco da Gama was one of my surprise hits of 2009. It is a beautiful well-working game that fascinated me at the beginning with its interesting mechanism. This euphoria disappeared quickly, the long-time interest in the game is limited.*

phases is the first one. In this phase, as is to be expected from my introduction, players in turn place workers. There are only four areas for the placement of these workers and each of these areas can only accept a certain amount of workers in relation to the number of players. The new feature and the highlight of this placement is, that you must place a so called time marker with your worker. These time markers have values of 1 to 20 and are available from a general stock at the start of

the game. The actions of the areas are implemented in the order of the time markers. Of course, in general, it is better to have your turn early as you have a wider selection at your disposal. But be careful, not all actions are free. In each round there is a limit. Actions carrying time markers equal to this limit or higher than the limit are free. All actions with a time marker lower than the limit must be paid for, the price is equal to the difference between the time marker and the limit. If the limit is 8, for instance, action 2 costs 6 units of money.

Should you be unable to finance an action or – for whatever reason – not want to implement it, you can renounce it and receive money instead – 1 unit of money for actions #1 to #5, 2 units of money for actions #6 to #10 and the full amount of 3 units of money for actions #11 to #20.

This implementation of actions is done in phase 2 of the game. In order of the time marker values, starting with #1, the corresponding player is asked whether he wants to implement the action or if he renounces it to earn money. If you implement the action, you pay the difference to the time limit – if applicable – and then immediately implement the action. As already mentions, there are only 4 areas of action:

1 – You can recruit seamen and / or captains. Seamen are available in four different colours. You can take any number of seamen from one of four areas. In an area you can have 5 seamen. The more different colours you pick the higher is the price you pay. If other players were before you, you must make do with what is left. In addition to seamen or instead of seamen you can take a captain of your own colour, his price is the same as you did pay for your seamen – if you did not take any seaman the captain is free.

2 – You can choose a character. These yield various advantages, as there are additional actions, the role of starting player or a fifth colour of seamen embodying missionaries, the characters and their advantages remain with the player until another player claims them.

3 – The area "buy projects" is refilled at the end of each round with 7 new projects. These projects come in the shape of tiles and represent different kinds of ships. You can buy these projects via actions and then launch the ship by discarding the appropriate number of seamen in the colours depicted on the tile. The launching is marked by turning over the



tile to the side showing the ship. The ships have different values for navigation and can earn you income or victory points in each round, later more on that.

4 - These ships can be sent to one of the harbors within the navigation range, using the action "expedition". To do so a slot must be available in the harbor of your choice and the navigation value of the ship must be equal to or higher than the value of the harbor slot. Furthermore you need an individual captain for each ship. The captain is placed on the ship tile and so marks ownership of your ship. The navigation value of the harbor spot is immediately credited to you in the form of victory points. Furthermore, the harbors yield additional advantages as there are money, seamen, captains or new projects.

When all actions have been implemented, the third phase begins. Players receive for all ships in the navigation range the coins and victory points depicted on the ships. Following this, all fully occupied harbors are emptied. Players receive again the victory points for each ship. Should there be empty slots available in the next harbor – harbors are arranged in a chain – you can move the ship there, if its navigation value is equal to or higher than the navigation value of the free slot. If no slot is available or the harbor being emptied be the last one in the chain, the ship is discarded, the captain goes back to its owner.

Then the "end of round" is implemented, comprising preparations for the next round, some players now score bonuses for their characters.

If the round was the final one of the game, a few more victory points are given out for money and ships launched, including captains, and the winner of the game is the player with most points.

Vasco da Gama is a beautiful game all around. Graphics and components are excellently done and the mechanics of the game seem polished and complete. The game works very well and is very balanced. The rules, too, are excellently written and leave nothing unanswered. But you should plan for a longer introduction / explanation time before your first game. It takes a while to grasp the unusual mechanism. Once you have it fixed in your mind, the game flow is fast and smooth. Playing time, accordingly, gets shorter with more experience and games played. The unusual mechanism using time markers to decide the sequence of actions makes the game attractive. In the first game some brain racking and mistakes are unavoidable – there will be lack of money, because it will come in the next action, or a ship cannot be made ready before the expedition action is implemented, because the action of hiring seamen comes afterwards. The limit value for the action is determined by chance in some

parts: Beginning with a pre-set starting value a number between -3 and +3 is added after the placement phase, but before the implementation phase. Players can guess at the actual limit, but don't know it exactly.

This of course invites speculation. You can play for safety and get at the end of the line with your action or take a risk in the full knowledge that you might not be able to implement the action. The little money you get for this failed implementation is not really a consolation. But I do not mind this little amount of chance / luck and it fits nicely into this all-over rather dry game.

My first impression of Vasco da Gama was very positive; after a first introductory game the interest to play again soon was very high. But unfortunately this interest dwindled quickly after a few games. There are now diverse strategies to try and the tactical considerations get repetitive, too. The unusual game mechanism is not strong enough to countermand that and loses its attraction rather quickly as well. The only variety comes from the interaction with other players. This does not change the fact that the game is very good and works very well, but it will be played again rather rarely by me. But tastes differ and Vasco da Gama is always worth at least

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## VASCO DA GAMA

**Designer:** Paolo Mori

**Artist:** Mariano Ianelli

**Distribution:** Hutter Trade

**Price:** ca. 40,00 Euro

**Publisher:** What's Your Game? 2009

[www.whatsyourgame.it](http://www.whatsyourgame.it)

## EVALUATION

Optimization game

For experts

Worker placement

### Comments

Excellent mechanism  
High interaction  
Chance sometimes a deciding factor  
Lots of tactics, no strategy  
Beautiful components  
Well-structured rules

**Compares to**  
Fresco, Tribun

### My rating



**PLAYERS**  
2-5

**AGE**  
12+

**TIME**  
120+



## 40 Lines for Meeples

Dagmar de Cassan, Editor-in-Chief

This is the second edition of **WIN The Games Journal** that is published in an English, too.

The positive reactions to the first edition have strengthened our resolution provide information on good games monthly in English, too. We might not always manage 40 pages, like last time, this depends on our reviewers, too, and like all of us they wait for the Essen fireworks of novelties.

Welcome to our pages this month, too, and we hope we may inspire you to a spontaneous game, we hope you share our fun with games and play with us. You find ideas and a wide selection of games in our Journal.

We love games and especially the brand new games, read about these games and play them, be a cosmopolitan and play games from all over the world.

WIN is published monthly, 12 times a year (resulting in more than 600 game reviews) and is supplemented by two special editions published on occasion of the Nuremberg and Essen Fairs (presenting more than 1.200 games). Read our Journal regularly!

Finally we would like to state for our editorial office – since this is necessary for some countries – that nobody in our editorial office receives benefits in kind, money, services or other remunerations from game publishers. All games for reviews are provided by the Austrian Games Museum and returned to it. If you like our WIN: The English version is available as PDF for free download under

<http://www.gamesjournal.at>

And we do more than publish a Journal: We are the Foundation Spielen in Österreich. Visit our web-site. Take a look at our Games Companion 2010.

<http://www.spielen.at>

See you next month!



DON'T PICTURE THE WORST!

# FRESKO

*Restoration by moody painters*



„Get out of bed, you good-for-nothing sleep-head! The market isn't open all day long!" – "Yes, Master (yaaaaaawn). I'm awake ...!" You should be well rested when you transfer yourself for one and a half hours into the renaissance in the guise of a fresco painter to help restore the ceiling fresco in the cathedral.

But before we can start and 2 to 4 opponents can prove their abilities in Fresko, we have to place a few things on the double-sided board (one side is meant for the four-player game, the other one for three players). A big wooden painter figure for each player is placed for a night's rest into the hostelry, another one into the theatre.

The theatre mirrors the actual mood in your painting studio – malcontent, nagging assistance work badly and less effective, which results in disadvantages – just as in real life. The third and last painter ends up where after 80 minutes the decision will be made who has impressed the bishop most: On the victory point bar, which surrounds the board in the best Kramer tradition. At start however, painters assembly pointlessly, that is without

points, at the starting position.

The small town depicted on the board is dominated by the big ceiling fresco in the cathedral that at the start is covers by 25 square tiles. These show colour pots which denote the combination that you must discard to take the tile and score the victory points stated on it. When the tile is taken off the board, a part of the fresco becomes visible in all its glory. That's nice to look at and makes the complete fresco visibly step by step during the game – an aesthetical feature that perfectly mirrors topic as well as aim of the game.

The colours necessary for the restoration of the fresco are available from the market. The four stalls of the market on the top edge of the board offer each round a randomly drawn selection of colours. The workshop holds the colour supply in the shape of coloured wooden cubes and the atelier, where you can paint portraits and thus earn a little extra money to butter your bread, complete the layout of the town. All this has been pic-

tured nicely, pretty and functional by Oliver Schlemmer, very fitting for a game with a topic of painting where your eyes come into play, too.

Good morning!

The early bird catches the worm, so to say, and that is the case in Fresko, too! At the start of each round we must fix the time to rise for our own assistants in the hostelry. The player with fewest victory points starts and places his painter onto the corresponding spot. This sets the player sequence for the following round. If you rise early, you move early, have free selection on the market but pay more than the sleepyhead who pays

**Stefan Olschewski**

*A well-made optimization game, well balanced with lots of cunning ideas and a nice "flow".*

one coin for the meager colour pot that is left on the market. But not only sequence of play and price are determined by the time to get up, but – logically – also the mood of the assistants. If you had to rise at 5 a.m. for weeks, you probably are rather mis-motivated as time advances. The consequences: The mood gets bad and in the worst case one of the assistants leaves and does not work for you anymore. On the other hand, when the mood is extremely good, you maybe acquire an additional assistant, which gives you an additional action in the round. And with that we have arrived at the game play itself! Good planning is already half of what is necessary to win.

As a team leader we must plan the optimum use for our – usually mediocre tempered – five wooden assistants behind our screen. In this we are assisted bei a board that shows the location of the big board and where we place our assistants. Each location may be visited in each round by a maximum of three assistants. So five locations and five assistants demand good planning to be at the right place at the right time! Then the screen is removed and the locations are dealt with in the order given by the rules. This also is started by the player who has risen the earliest – an advantage that can be easily planned, if you want to use it. Directly after getting up go walk yawning to market to buy colours or – to be bit nasty early in the morning – to close a market stall. This is free and thus available also when you are short of money





and can put quite a spoke in the wheels of the other players who have speculated with certain colours.

In the cathedral each assistant can restore a tile that scores him the victory points noted on the tile, and, laid out face up, earns the restorer one additional coin at the start of each round. If you happen to manage to restore a tile that carries the white bishop or is adjacent to the tile carrying the bishop you score a bonus of three or two points, respectively. If you are not satisfied with the income from successfully restored fresco parts you have the chance to cash three additional coins for each assistant in the studio before you enter the workshop. There the acquired colours can be mixed. Ant his is urgent and necessary, because the really valuable fresco tiles demand green or purple cubes and those can only be acquired by the right mixture of primary colours.

Giddy up! Raise your spirit!

Time for relaxation is scarce in all that bustle and so it is a good idea to grant yourself or, even better, grant your assistants a visit to the theatre. This improves the temper by two notches and if the mood has topped the scale even yields an additional assistant – so that you can send out six assistants in the next round, which in turn raises the spirit of the player directing them.

By the way, the spirit at the table was absolutely positive an all of the test games. Despite the complexity, that is definitely involved, functions and flow of the game are logical, realistic and easy to understand, so that very few questions remain. This is also thanks to the well-structured and nicely illustrated rules that manages to explain the game completely on only 8 pages-

All is well that ends well?!

Well, when there are only 6 or fewer tiles left in the cathedral, the last rounds begins. Players can in this round work twice at the fresco to have a final go at improving their score. Finally, remaining coins are changed into victory points and if you after that have most of the victory points, you win.

That's been that. Or not. Because contrary to the common practice of publishing expansions a few months later for good money, the publisher has packed three additional modules into the box, which make the game more tactical but at the same time less clear and more of a thinking game. Surely ideal for heavy gamers, to families I would recommend the basic game, which has its qualities without and be even because of lacking further colour mixes, Bishop's demand tiles or portrait cards with special abilities.

The designers Marco Ruskowski and Marcel Süßelbeck did not use really new elements for their first game, but have interlocked well-

known mechanisms that neatly and well balanced that Fresko in total is more than the sum of its components.

Two are missing one

Oh, by the way, Fresko can be played by two. In theory, at last. In practice you once again meet a neutral imaginary player, here at least called Leonardo, who is moved alternately by both players in addition to their own move. That mechanism feels very artificial and only assists in printing "2-4 players" on the box. In game play the 2-player version definitely loses in comparison to the 3- and 4-player game.

Conclusion

The are few games that appeal to casual gamers as well as to heavy gamers. The much applauded Finca is one of them and Fresko now joins the ranks. The lack of almost all chance interests tacticians and strategists, the beautiful components and the easy-to-understand rules in the face of a complex games entice even a games-interested family to play. And should it get boring, eventually, there are always the three expansions. Another three are in the making, so the publisher says. But those come comme il faut as separate expansion in their own box.

Stefan.Olschewski@spielen.at

## FRESKO

**Designer:** M. Ruskowski und M. Süßelbeck

**Artist:** Oliver Schlemmer

**Distribution:** Piatnik

**Price:** ca. 35,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Queen Games 2010

[www.queengames.com](http://www.queengames.com)

## EVALUATION

Strategic optimization game  
With friends  
collect and mix colours

### Comments

Winner of DSP 2010  
Good design  
The high quality components invite to play  
Perfectly constructed and balanced mechanisms  
Lots of depth for simple rules  
Good both for families and experts

### Compares to

Cuba, Im Schutze der Burg oder Stone Age, other games with worker placement and changing of components into victory points

### My rating



### PLAYERS

2-4

### AGE

10+

### TIME

60+



## GAMES BUYER INFORMATION SYSTEM - GABIS

### STRUCTURE

Each game review also features an evaluation which can help you to find the game that best suites your tastes. The colour accompanying each game title represents the *Target Group*. The headline also contains information on age and number of players. The *BAR* in the evaluation box displays colour codes for up to 10 *features* of a game.

### TARGET GROUPS

We have defined 4 target groups (colour accompanying the head line)

#### Children:

Games for children an educational games. Adults can play in guiding function

#### Families:

Children and parents play together, all have the same chance to win and have fun

#### Friends:

Young people and adults play together as equals

#### Experts:

Games with special demands on rules and playing time. Especially for game geeks

Games that are especially eligible for *Solo play* or for 2 *players* or *Large groups* of players are marked with an icon. Please note for the target groups Children, Family and Friends: Children who love to play can be ahead of their peers! Please note that our target group "families" does not imply the classical concept of „family games"! Furthermore, our target groups can overlap. The choice of the suitable games always depends on your playing partners and your fun with games!

### FEATURES

Each game targets preferences for different features in a player, therefore each game is not suitable for each player. We have listed 10 features players note when deciding on a game. Only if a player finds his preferred features in a game he will enjoy the game. The colour code marks the dominant features. Educational games train the highlighted preference.

#### Chance:

The game is influenced by dice, cards or any other form of random generator

#### Tactic:

Take decision, short-term planning, planning based on one move

#### Strategy:

Think ahead, long-term planning, planning for several moves

#### Creativity:

The player has to provide words, phrases, images and other creative efforts.

#### Knowledge:

Cultural and educational knowledge, long-term memory

#### Memory:

Remember, learn by heart, short-time memory

#### Communication:

Talk to each other, negotiate, inform

#### Interaction:

Influencing each other, bluffing, auction

#### Dexterity:

Motor skills

#### Action:

Body movement, balance and reaction

### Colours in the Bar

Empty boxes: This feature is not present or minimal

One coloured box: This feature of the game is present, but not essential

Two coloured boxes: This feature is present and important in the game

Three coloured boxes: This feature dominates



CITY AT THE QUAYSIDE

# DIE SPEICHERSTADT

*Ships, lofts and fires*

The lofts at the quays of Hamburg a renowned sight, the famous buildings still let you feel their importance in an earlier age as a central market place for coffee, spices and other wares. Stefan Feld's game tries to catch the flair of days gone by and to let players achieve economic success in the role as head of one of the big merchant houses.

Players must win shiploads in auctions, sell wares and fill demands, often hindered by fires that happen in the lofts. So you need to invest in a private fire brigade to avoid damage to your enterprise.

To prepare the game the trade cards are separated according to their backside in the four season stacks spring, summer, autumn and winter. The autumn cards are shuffled and placed face down on top of Fire Card 4, then you shuffle the summer cards and place them face down on top of the autumn cards, followed by the spring and winter cards – the game starts in winter and ends in the autumn of next year.

The commodity cubes for the commodities coffee, tea, saffron, carpets and rubber are placed in the bag.

Each player starts with a market hall card, four workers and five coins, the rest of the coins is set aside as bank. The board is placed on the table and equipped with trade cards according to the number of players, clearly marked on the board. One worker of each player is set on the 0 spot on the scoring bar. A nice idea, but not always feasible, is the way how to determine the starting player, the role goes to the player who has been in Hamburg most recently.

The game is played in rounds, and each round comprises five phases:

1. Supply
2. Demand
3. Acquisition
4. Loading
5. Income

**Supply**

The board shows 6 water spots for trade cards. Depending on the number of players the cards are placed from left to right on the water spots, 3 cards for 2 players, 4 cards for 3 players, 5 cards for 4 players and finally 6 cards for 5 players.

The earliest time for ships to come into play is spring. Ships have room for 3 commodity cubes. If a ship is laid out in the supply phase the starting player draws three cubes from the bag and places them on the ship card.

**Demand**

This phase starts when placing of the trade cards has ended. Above each card are 8 positions where workers can be placed for the auction. Beginning with the starting player in turn all players place a worker on the first free position above a trade card. Where you place a worker is entirely your own choice. When all workers are placed, there are rows of different numbers of workers above each





trade card, and of course, if you like, you can place several workers in a row.

### Acquisiton

This phase is done in order of the trade cards, from left to right of the board. The player owning the first worker in the row above the first card is asked if he wants to buy the cards. And here it gets interesting – because

**Maria Schranz**

*Die Speicherstadt offers a very interesting bid/auction mechanism that you should try for yourself!*

the price is equal to the number of workers in a row! So the price can be between 1 and 8 coins. Here I have to note that lack of coins is a standard situation in the game!

If you pay the price you take the card and all other workers in the row go back to their owners. If you do not pay the price you take your worker back and the player owning the next man in the row is offered the card. For him, the price of course is one coin less than for you. This is continued till the card is sold. Should no one be interested the card goes out of the game.

When all cards have been dealt with this phase ends. Should ships have been among the trade cards, the player also gets the commodity cubes on the ship card.

### Loading

This phase can happen first in spring, as there are no ships in the Winter trade cards. If ships were offered and sold, players who bought those ships and / or players who have commodity cubes from earlier rounds can place them on demand cards, the storage barn or the market hall or sell them.

Demand cards are trade cards that have been bought in the acquisition phase, they can earn you 5, 8 or 11 victory points, but only, if you have placed all commodities depicted on them at the end of the game. For 5 victory points you need 2 commodities, for 8 points 3 and for 11 points for commodities, of course in the corresponding colours. The moment you have placed commodities on demand cards, you cannot take them off any more and if you cannot complete the demand these commodities are lost. The market hall you received at the start of the game, allows you three possibilities: 1 - You can store 1 commodity cube for later use on demand cards or sale. 2 - you can exchange any 3 commodity cubes for 1 selected cube or 3 - you can sell 2 commodity cubes for 1 coin.

If you did buy the trade card "storage", you can store 4 commodity cubes there for later use. If you have cubes left in storage at the end of the game they score 1 victory point each. For each commodity there is also a card

that lets you sell single commodity cubes.

Cubes that you cannot sell and not place on demand cards or the market hall go out of game, they do not go back into the bag. Sold commodity cubes also go out of the game. When all players have distributed or disposed otherwise of the commodities, the loading phase ends.

### Income

Each player receives 1 coin from the bank. If a player could not buy a trade card in this round he gets an additional coin. The starting player marker is handed on and a new round starts with placing trade cards. If one season is used in the middle of laying out cards you simply go on with cards from the next season.

### Evaluation

So far we have neglected the Fires. They turn up once in each season stack and interrupt play immediately, and there is a fire at the end of the game. Firemen are also available from the trade cards and you should try to buy at least one. When a fire turns up it is scored: The player with the highest total of firemen points scores the value of the fire – 1, 2, 3 or 4 points for the final fire. The player with the least total of firemen loses the same amount of victory points, nothing happens to the players with firemen of values in between the two extremes.

It is not necessary always to have the best fire brigade, but it is disastrous to lose all four fire scorings – this costs you a total of 10 victory points and definitely any chance to win. So keep your eyes on the fire brigades of your fellow players!

During the game victory points for the players can vary wildly as only completed demand cards score victory points. The basic mechanism of the game works very well, the auction mechanism is interesting and new – but you cannot really estimate or plan which trade cards you will be able to acquire. So the game is all tactics and not much strategy, with one exception – keep your eyes on the fire brigades! But take care – always having the best brigade might not be sufficient to win!

One good possibility is to focus on the placement of your last worker and to use the first two to rise prices for the other players. Some demand cards already come up in winter, but the first ships appear in spring, so acquiring early demand cards is mainly a question of luck as you cannot determine that early if you will have a chance to meet these demands. It is certainly a tactical possibility to grab what you can get cheaply and see what you can do with it.

The one thing that really needs planning is management of your coins – how many do

I want to spend and how many do I need to keep for next round, when I am starting player and so have first choice – which also can be a drawback as the others can rise my price. In that aspect the last player of the round has a distinctive advantage.

The graphics of the game are okay, noting special, but work well for the game – the flair of the game is nice and really lets you imagine being a trader in old Hamburg. The game play for 2 works exceedingly well, it is a lot more tactical and strategic as well, because you can estimate far better your chances to get a certain card.

### Resumee

A well made game with nice components, the time to play is short and the rules are simple and quickly explained. It is not primarily a game for strategists or tacticians, but is fun to play and I recommend it to all players interested in new and uncommon mechanisms. Due to the simple rules, families can play as well.

Discerning players like it too, because after a few games you know roughly which cards to expect when and can try to save your coins for the really important cards like the storage barn.

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## DIE SPEICHERSTADT

**Designer:** Stefan Feld

**Artist:** Michael Menzel, Harald Lieske

**Distribution:** Berg Toy

**Price:** ca. 25,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Eggert Spiele 2010

[www.eggertspiele.de](http://www.eggertspiele.de)

## EVALUATION

Auction game

For families

Bid for cards, meet demands

**PLAYERS**  
2-5

**AGE**  
8+

**TIME**  
45+

### Comments

Good and functional components

Short, good rules

Very good for two players

Gets more interesting with each game played

### Compares to

Medici, Dschunke

### My rating





WHO HOLDS THE REINS?

# MEGA CORPS

*The big companies, of course*



Our world is complex, but must that be so or could it be different? This game shows several possibilities and pulls the legs of several conglomerates, or does it? How do we know that governments rule the world and not the conglomerates? This game points out how it could be! Imagine the Mouse Company coming from a democratic China and producing the best games in the world. Or Windoze treading new paths and investing in oil and Nonintendo leading the way in the software sector. The game shows us that media rule the world, they decide if a country is a democracy or not. If you want to change the world invest in media, no wonder that Mokia rules the world.

Obviously, the game's topic is economy as ruler of the world and who is leading the economy has the most influence on our world. But economy cannot be conquered in passing, good and diligent groundwork is essential to be in front! At the beginning you have to decide which branch of business you want to start with, do you want to make films or produce computers. Based on this decision you choose your favorite MegaCorps. A representative of this MegaCorp is thrown in a cup with all the other representatives and one is pulled out to decide the starting player. The owner of this representative receives the Active Player card. Then the representative is thrown back into the cup, because we need to draw one again to determine who controls ASEAN and draw again to determine who controls the African Federation, the respective MegaCorps markers are placed on the board on the spot next to these countries.

This brings us to the board; it shows a grid of columns for industry branches and rows for countries. There are 12 industries, each has 5 boxes in different countries. And there are 12 rows for countries, mostly big industrial countries like China, Japan or India, but also country conglomerates like EU or the above mentioned ASEAN. Each country row has a different number of industry boxes. Some countries are controlled at the beginning by already-printed in MegaCorps markers.

Then event cards are drawn from the stack, the number you may draw depends on how many countries you control. If you do not have any countries to control you draw to cards. If you exercise control over one coun-

try you are limited to drawing one card, and should you control 2 or more countries you do not draw a card at all. The remaining cards are the draw pile for the game and also function as a kind of round marker, but more of that later.

The number of MegaCorps owners determines the number of cards that can be in this deck. Should four MegaCorps rival for power, 16 event cards make up the Event Deck. Each player has a start capital of 40 Euros and a mercenary for use in his wars. Finally, before the fight for power can begin, we place two of our own MegaCorps markers = companies on the board. The first round goes clockwise from the starting player, the second one counter-clockwise, till each player has placed both company markers. Thus, you have two company markers within different industries at the beginning of the game, hopefully those that bring the most revenue and therefore are promising to invest in.

As already mentioned, the power struggle is played out in rounds that all follow the same scheme: At the start of the round the start player draws 1 Event Card and follows its instructions. No other player is allowed to draw an event card, only the starting player may do so! Then each player in turn has one of six possible actions. When each player has finished his action, the round ends and a new round is started by handing the Active Player card to the player next to the current starting player. Before I describe the possible action I need to mention that in each round the action Payout can only happen once!

Now the possible action of a round in detail: The first of these actions is buying a new company. This costs four Euros and you choose a free spot on the board that is neither nationalized nor syndicated to place your MegaCorps marker.

The next possibility for an action is Payout, only possible once in a round, as already mentioned above. This earns money for the MegaCorps, earning money from your companies can happen in three ways during the game, payout is one of them. The others are playing an event card to that effect and finally, at the end of the game, there is a payout for all companies and industries, but more on that later. Back to payout: The player who decided on payout determines

the industry that pays out, and of course he will choose the branch where he has most companies and is represented alone, if possible, as payout not only earns him money, but also for all opponents. The amount paid out depends on the number of rivals in this industry.

But note that each free spot is considered a rival as well as opposing companies present. When the number of rivals has been counted, you check the payout bar on the board for the multiplier to use on your number of companies in this industry. Say, you have 3 opponents in the media industry, so you multiply your companies in this industry by 6. These three factories earn you 18 Euros revenue; the other companies earn 6 Euros, as they only have one company in the industry. After Payout you receive the Paid card; you cannot choose another payout while you hold this card.

But as things are not always what they seem and everyone has their fingers in every pie, the selection of actions also offers the possibility to initiate a government intervention. This intervention has the purpose to steal companies from other MegaCorps in certain industries. But you can only choose this action if you control a country yourself. You choose a company in your country to remove it from the control of its owner. How this is done is determined by the government in this country, whether it is a democracy, a dictatorship or a so called Kleptocracy.

In case of a democracy the MegaCorps marker is taken off the board and its owner is refunded his investment of 4 Euros. If it is a Kleptocracy you steal the company from the MegaCorps and simply replace it with your own MegaCorps marker. The player controlling the country simply attains control over another company by stealing it from another MegaCorps, the other player is not refunded and loses his investment. If the country is a dictatorship, the company is nationalized by the government intervention; this company does not earn any revenues for anybody and is also not counted as an opponent in the Payout action.

A fourth choice of action, for defense purposes, is the hiring of mercenaries that go to war for the MegaCorps. You just have to announce that you hire a mercenary. It is of paramount importance for this action that you



have a minimum of one company in the defense industry, because for each company in this industry you receive one mercenary for free. If there are nationalized or syndicated companies present in the industry, you pay 1 Euro per mercenary you want to hire. You can also negotiate with the heads of other companies in the industry if they are willing to sell one of their mercenaries; the sale price is jointly determined by both parties

And what would you need mercenaries for but to launch a war? Therefore the fifth possibility for an action in a round is to launch a war. With the help of war you try to free other countries from the control by opposing players or to obtain control over still uncontrolled countries. To choose this action you must have a minimum of one mercenary. You choose the country you want to go to war against. All mercenaries of the defending country are involved in this war as well as all your own mercenaries. Nobody else but the attacking and defending parties is involved in the war, but other MegaCorps can offer assistance in the shape of mercenaries to the warring parties.

And how do you war? The attacking player adds all his attack points – these come from the attack points of the country that you use to attack with and from your mercenaries. The defender does the same and adds the defense points for his country and the values of his mercenaries. If the attack value is higher than the defense value the attacker wins the war and takes control of the attacked country and places one of his MegaCorps markers there. If the defense value is higher, the attacker loses and the defender retains control over his country.

Regardless if you win or lose the war, some or all of your mercenaries are lost, depending on the actual situation: If only the attacker used mercenaries, he loses one of his mercenaries. Should both parties have used mercenaries, the player who has used the smaller amount loses all of them and the other player loses this amount, too. For instance, if one party used 3 mercenaries and the other party 5, both parties lose 3 mercenaries. At the end of the war there is an immediate government intervention, if the loser owns a company in the country. The last action you can choose in your turn is to pass.

Players hold event cards either from the start of the game or get one when they are start player. These event cards need not be played immediately when you receive them, you can use the cards whenever you deem it necessary. Once used, they are effective immediately.

The game ends when the event cards are used up. Then a final payout happens, all industries are paid out once again. Whoever has now most money, wins the game.

Top and foremost, my criticism goes to the rules of this game, I find them inscrutable and not well-laid out. Some topics are mentioned superficially and three pages later the topic is intensively taken care of. This is irritating and uses up a lot of time. I have tried to present the game in a more structured way, but not completely – I have restricted myself to the most important parts of the game, to the elements that govern the game, everything else

#### Isabella Schranz

*An interesting topic; not optimally transferred to the game board. But try it all the same, it has a certain attraction.*

you can read up during the game.

Another point for me is the different valency of industries, some industries are more important than others. One of these industries is the media industry, which influence election. They determine who has control and so can decide outcome of the game. Another of these industries is defense, as you must have a company there to get a free mercenary or to be able to hire mercenaries. This makes the game unbalanced and you can see rather early in the game who is going to win.

A positive element of the game are the event cards, they change the flow of the game and introduce interaction. Especially in the first five to seven rounds players restrict themselves to investing and don't scheme and that loses the game a bit of fun. And that is especially important as fun and interaction are rather lacking in the flow of the game, because of the way the rounds are structured – one player has his action, then the next – there is little communication and that detracts from the attraction of the game. On the other hand, you cannot always use the card in an optimal way and you rarely get cards that

work well for yourself – which sometimes causes playing of the cards just to get rid of them without using their full potential. And, interestingly, the option stated at the end of the rules that you make any trade with any player any time do barter, buy, sell or swap was not used at all in our games, we all played mostly to ourselves.

The same imbalance governs the distribution of powers as regards the EU and China, both defense and attack powers of these countries are so big that they surely will never be attacked, which directs the game in a certain direction. I think, if you control EU and China you do not have to worry about war and will probably very far advanced in the final scoring. My conclusion is, the game was marketed in a stage far from finished, there are too many small defects and there are far more possibilities in the mechanisms than have been brought into play, developers have only scratched the surface, there is not much depth in the game. Which definitely is a pity, as the topic is fascinating and could have yielded a much more complex play. So you end up with the feeling that something is missing despite the loving care that went into funny details like the names of the MegaCorps.

**wn** [Isabella.Schranz@spielen.at](mailto:Isabella.Schranz@spielen.at)

### MEGA CORPS

**Designer:** Greg Costikyan  
**Artist:** David Monette  
**Distribution:** Pegasus  
**Price:** ca. 35,00 Euro  
**Publisher:** Z-Man Games 2009  
[www.zmangames.com](http://www.zmangames.com)

### EVALUATION

Placement game  
 With friends  
 Optimal revenues

**PLAYERS**  
 3-6

**AGE**  
 13+

**TIME**  
 90+

#### Comments

Interesting topic  
 Funny details, like the company names  
 Rules badly structured  
 Distribution of powers is imbalanced

#### Compares to

Economy games as regards to topic, otherwise placement games with optimization and event cards.

#### My rating





COCOA BEANS SACRIFICED TO QUETZALQUOATL

# CHOCOLATL

*Be rewarded with huts, points or pyramid stones*

8+



I want to start this review with a selection of a few randomly selected thoughts and remarks that came up while unpacking and setting up the game and reading through the rules.

\* At the very start I want to note that in this game for 3-5 players by Günter Burkhardt at Quined Games great care was taken to make the game transparent for players. More on that later!

\* A few of my fellow players, remarked that the game is far away from its title, I cannot follow this argument, because

\* Chocolatl seems to be also an other name for one of the old Aztec gods, the feathered snake god Quetzalcoatl.

\* I definitely must remark on the absolutely high quality of the rules despite there being a few tongue-twisting names straight out of Middle America's ancient history in the text – the already named Quetzalcoatl, plus Cholulul, Tenochtitlan and others.

\* Another positive feature of the rules is the absolutely clear and well-formulated description of the game – the rules have an extra column where the most important elements

are repeated and illustrated.

\* Back to the topic. The game's topic is the time of the Middle American Aztecs, who constructed impressive pyramids and who held cocoa in high esteem as an important part of their culture.

\* Therefore I think that the title is more than justified, and, considering the multitude of games published, a good choice because there cannot be many games with this title or a similar topic.

But now to the game! In my opinion it is an entertaining game for a short 45 minutes. The number of rounds is variable due to a choice of end-of-game conditions, but there are never more than 7 and so it is a very straightforward game.

During the game you offer sacrifices to the gods by bidding with bags of cocoa, represented an identical deck of cards for each player. Straight at the start you sacrifice one of the 13 cards of value 0-13 by setting it aside face down; this card yields victory points at the end of the game. Already this can be used for a little tactical consideration.

A high card would yield lots of victory points at the end of the game, but will be sorely missed during the game when bidding, as the bids are the core of the game. I think that you should, especially in a first play, decide on a card of middle value.

Then preparations are made for the start of the round, this also happens in all of the other rounds. Three dice are rolled to determine the harvest of cocoa beans. Then one bid card from each of two stacks, one of them with slightly higher values, is placed on station 6 of the board. Stack is maybe an exaggeration as at the start the stack holds 6 cards. A black die is placed, according to the rules it can show any of its faces ... but it is of utmost importance to move the round indicator, because this gives different amounts of points in each round.

And now we can start.

You place your secret bids under a scheme of the 6 stations, which can yield victory points in several different ways. Both the highest bid and the lowest bid bring advantages/victory





points or disadvantages for the bidder. And that is the point where you could try to place your bids according to your strategic priorities – if you can talk about strategies in this game, because basically the game is rather simple and suitable for beginners, and can absolutely be played on a gut level. Anyway, you have two cards each for the 6 stations, the card values are added when the bids are evaluated.

Depending on the position of the leading player one of three bidding methods is used. If the leader stands on red and for the first round the following method is used: You place all 12 cards – 2 each to every station – beneath the scheme of stations. If the leader stands on a golden spot, you bid for each station separately, after each bid the bids are turned up and evaluated. If the leader stands on a green spot, you place one card each for each station, then all these cards are revealed and players place a second card, again face down. This is the variant that best allows you to take into account possible strategies or tactics of your fellow players.

The objects at the first station are “Chocolatl” and “Old Man”. The highest bidder immediately wins one victory point and receives Chocolatl. Chocolatl is a tie breaker to the advantage of his owner for the rest of the round. The player with the lowest bid receives Old Man, he has the effect to lower the following bids by one, but he gives you a bonus in the first bid of the next round, where he is again an object of the bid. In case of ties involving only players without Chocolatl the bid goes to the player furthest behind on the victory point scale, and in a further tie the one whose marker is on top.

Then we move to the second station, where three players can earn victory points. This is also the moment where the cocoa harvest – determined by the three white dice rolled at the start of round – comes into play. The results of the roll are the victory points and are allocated to the three best bids, respectively.

At the third station the winner of the bidding has two options. First, he can build a hut. This hut earns him +1 in any bid at any station for the rest of the game, with the exception of station 3 itself, as here the huts must be preserved and to pay for this upkeep the bid is lowered by one. The second option is to take a black bonus die, which can either be rolled anytime to enhance a card bid by the result, or rolled once at the end of the game for victory points. If building a hut, the player deposits one of his markers to indicate the bonus, and in addition to that he also receives a tile. SO forgetting the bonus should be impossible.

The fourth station takes us at long last back into the era of the Aztecs, because now we build pyramids. At this station the winner of the bid may place 2 markers into the pyramid if the difference between his bid and the

#### Hans Mosteböck

*Chocolatl offers a quick game for experienced gamers and a beautiful game with interesting mechanisms demanding a little tactic and empathy for a family.*

second highest is equal to or higher than 3. These markers earn bonus points for the player who contributed most markers when a level is finished. Ties here are also decided by Chocolatl. Furthermore, the markers score one victory point per marker at the end of the game and a bonus of three points for the player with most markers. When the difference in the bids is lower than 3, both players can place markers; the player with the higher bid decides who goes first – this can be of importance in case of levels being completed. At the end of the game there can happen a tie for the allocation of the bonus. My personal opinion: Pyramids are not the method to win the game.

Why? Well, because already at the fifth station we play for valuable victory points, especially in the first rounds. The amounts of victory points up for the bidding dwindle every round. In the first round the winner of the bid receives 8 points, the second 4 points. In round 2 and 3 you can still get 7/3 and 6/2. From round 4 on only the winner of the bid scores points, 5, 4, 3 and 2. But take care! The player with the lowest bid must accept two minus points at this station.

Finally, we have reached station 6 and have mentioned nearly everything that is of importance for the game. At this station your goal is, mainly in the first rounds, to receive more valuable bidding cards to be able to discard the lower ones, especially the Zero card. These higher bidding cards can give you enormous advantages in the following rounds. If you still have your Zero card in the fourth round, you will have trouble to bid successfully at important stations!

At the end of the game player score the points for the pyramid. The player holding Chocolatl scores 3 more points and the player holding “Old Man” loses 3 points. The card sacrificed at the start of the game is turned up now and each player scores its value. The player who was most generous with his sacrifice receives a bonus of 3 points in addition to the value of his card. If you have a spare black bonus die you roll it now for additional victory points.

The player with the highest total has best

gratified the gods and wins the game.

In a 3-player game it can happen that the cocoa harvest plays a rather unimportant part in the game, if you roll rather similar values. A note to dedicated gamers: If you have 45 minutes to fill, this game is ideally suited as a filler or as an entry or final game at an evening of games. The interesting point is that you should be able to read your fellow players to influence the outcome to your advantage at some of the important stations. Distributing cards evenly will – especially in a game with the maximum of five players – not be successful. If you like to see emotions as a consequence of successful or unavailing action you will like the game.

Finally, I would like to remark again on the absolutely fabulous clarity and clear arrangement of the game – there are even 6 scheme boards for five players, which illustrate the stations and their properties clearly and briefly. As most players have used their own board to deposit the bids, one can place the spare board in the middle of the table for all to see. And if despite everything, you have a question, the rules will answer them quickly and clearly.

 [Hans.Mostböck@spielen.at](mailto:Hans.Mostböck@spielen.at)

## CHOCOLATL

**Designer:** Günter Burkhardt

**Artist:** Ryan Laukat

**Distribution:** Piatnik

**Price:** ca. 35,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Huch & Friends / Quined 2010

[www.huchandfriends.de](http://www.huchandfriends.de)

## EVALUATION

bidding and optimization game

For families

Bid for stations / advantages

PLAYERS  
3-5

AGE  
8+

TIME  
45+

### Comments

A nice filler game with a good mixture of chance and a little tactics

Components fit the topic very well

Very good family game

### Compares to

The Pillars of the Earth for resolving stations, generally all bidding games

### My rating





# ARIMAA

DECEPTIBLY SIMPLE!



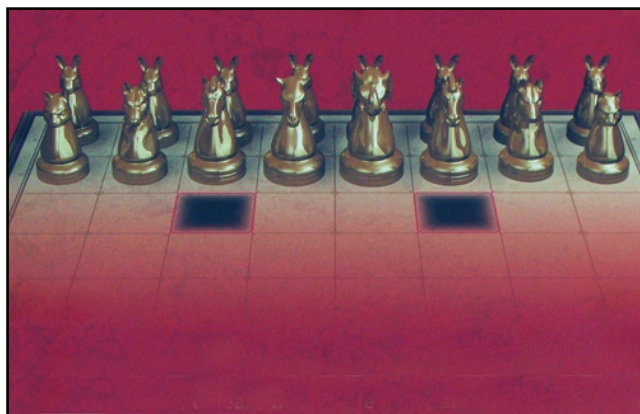
Some games one simply has to present, even if they already a few years on the market, and of these games is this chess variant. But is this a chess variant?

Arimaa in any case is an abstract position game, simple at first sight, but with unfathomed tactical and strategic depths. The aim of the game seems simple – be the first to get one of your rab-

bits to the opposite side of the board. Each player has 8 rabbits, 1 elephant 1 camel, 2 horses, 2 dogs and 2 cats, in analogy to chess pieces. Gold starts and distributes his figures in any way he wants on the first two rows of the board before him, then silver does the same. All figures move the same way, any distance orthogonally, but rabbits cannot

move backwards. In your turn you move a maximum of four steps, either with one piece or with several pieces. You can pass on some of the steps, but must move a minimum of one step per turn. Stronger pieces can move weaker pieces, either pushing or pulling them. Stronger pieces also keep weaker ones in place when they stand next to them. A piece that pushes cannot at the same time pull. There are four marked trap spots on the board. If a piece moves on a trap, it goes out of the game, unless your own stronger piece stands beside it to protect it. If you cannot move because all your pieces are frozen you have lost.

A fascination abstract game, based on chess, already unfathomable by the changing starting positions of the pieces. Children can play, but mastering the game will take you a very long time. And despite all the similarities, it is not chess!



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2

AGE  
10+

TIME-  
var

**Designer:** Omar und Aamir Syed

**Artist:** Karim Chakroun

**Distributor A:** Pegasus

**Price:** ca. 35,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Z-Man Games 2002

[www.zmangames.com](http://www.zmangames.com)

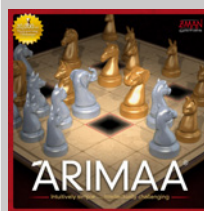
## EVALUATION

abstract position game  
For experts  
Move pieces, reach border

### Comments

Based on Chess  
Independent rules, different board  
Many strategic and tactic possibilities  
Easy to learn

**Compares to**  
Chess



# ATLANTIS TREASURE

TREASURE HUNT AMONG CORAL REEFS

9+

Treasure hunt among the coral reefs around the sunken temple of Atlantis! Players navigate their submarine around the reefs and collect treasures. They use compasses, block fellow players and fire torpedoes to remove obstacles in their way.

In your turn you have two actions in any order: Move your submarine as far as possible in

one direction and a die action. Possible die actions are placing a compass, relocating a coral reef or firing a torpedo, if you want to. Movement of the submarine is blocked by another submarine, a compass, a coral reef, the edge of the board or the temple of Atlantis. There is a special rule for the compass: When the submarine encounters a compass, it stops,

the compass is taken off the board and the submarine continues moving in the direction indicated by the compass till it encounters another obstacle. Obstacles can be removed using the die action fire torpedo: The torpedo hits and removes the first submarine, the first compass or the first coral reef in its line of sight. If you hit a submarine, you collect one of its treasures and your move ends. If your submarine encounters a treasure, you take it and your turn ends. The first player to collect three treasures wins the game.

Atlantis Treasure again offers a fabulous implementation of a standard topic using Lego blocks and the buildable die. The rule suggests variations for using coral reefs or compasses and you can publish your own ideas for the game on the Lego home-page. The treasure hunt among the coral reefs is fun and the additional rules allow for some tactics.



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
9+

TIME  
30+

**Designer:** unstated

**Artist:** unstated

**Distribution:** Speciality stores

**Price:** ca. 25,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Lego Spiele 2010

[www.spiele.lego.de](http://www.spiele.lego.de)

## EVALUATION

Adventure game  
For families  
Roll die, move, collect treasure

### Comments

Buildable Die  
Fantastic components  
Mechanisms fit the topic very well  
Players are encouraged to invent variants

**Compares to**  
Other Lego games



## CAESAR & CLEOPATRA

WHO WINS THE FIGHT FOR EGYPT?



Caesar and Cleopatra quarrel about Egypt. Using legal and less legal means they try to twin the real powers in Rome, the patricians, for their cause. These patricians are laid out in five stacks together with a stack of vote-of-confidence cards. Both players have an identical deck of cards that they must separate to their own taste into reserve stacks and

a hand card stack, you cannot look at the reserve stacks again after setting them aside. Finally, you draw your special task from the "influence bonus cards", the rest of these cards is taken out of the game.

Cleopatra begins. You play one face-down or two open influence cards to a patrician's stack, may play an action card, replen-

ish your hand and then turn up a vote-of-confidence card. Action cards – spies, scouts, wrath of the gods, switch, assault or veto – are implemented immediately. If you have most influence at the stack in a vote of confidence you win the topmost patrician. When the orgy card appears, there is no vote of confidence. 8 influence cards next to a stack also initiate a vote of confidence. When all patricians have been given out or if a player is out of influence cards, the game ends. You score victory points for patricians, majorities in groups of patricians and influence bonuses.

In this new edition the game has been packed elegantly in a tin box under the heading Classic for Two. An absolutely appropriate heading, the game is 13 years after its first appearance still one of the best card games for two, with a good mix of luck and tactics and good rules, interesting for beginners as well as experienced players.



### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2

AGE  
10+

TIME  
30+

**Designer:** Wolfgang Lüdtker

**Artist:** Franz Vohwinkel

**Distribution:** Kauffert

**Price:** ca. 20,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Kosmos 2010

[www.kosmos.de](http://www.kosmos.de)

### EVALUATION

Card game for two with  
For families  
Play cards for majorities

#### Kommentar

New edition, first published 1997  
Simple rules - Gut, fast game for 2  
Luck and tactics are well balanced

#### Vergleichbar

All placement games with  
direct comparison for  
majorities



## COMMANDER KIKERIKI

STOP THE ALIEN CHICKEN!

Alternate name: Cosmic Chicken



The spaceship from Planet Chicken, piloted by the Evil Chicken himself, wants to spread asteroid eggs around in order to take over earth. Players try to collect the asteroid eggs to ward off the invasion. To set up the game adult assistance is necessary. On a central space station the spaceship from Planet Chicken is docked, with the evil alien chicken sitting in

the cockpit. Four Astro slides are situated radially around the station, including carts and Asteroid Egg Catchers. At the start of the game place all twelve eggs into the egg tray. Each player chooses one of the catchers and sits down in front of his own catcher. Now the station can be switched on. As soon as the spaceship lifts off asteroid eggs roll out of the

tray! Move your catcher up and down in order to push the eggs into your cart to slide them into your catcher. Eggs that fall off the slide are placed back into the egg tray. When all eggs have been collected, the player with the most asteroid eggs in his catcher wins. For a reward he may press the blue button on the spaceship and send the evil alien chicken back into space.

For years Hasbro has been amusing children with ever new and funny ideas for games, realized with gimmicks that are lavishly and painstakingly put together. Cosmic Chickens fits well into this parade that has also featuring Loopin' Louie or Giggie Wiggle. The mechanism is similar to that of Hungry Hungry Hippo, but the game offers a funny story, a fascinating gimmick and very good training of hand-eye-coordination, spatial sense and controlled movements.



### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
5+

TIME  
15+

**Author:** nicht genannt

**Grafik:** nicht genannt

**Vertrieb A:** Hasbro Österreich

**Preis:** ca. 25,00 Euro

**Verlag:** Hasbro / MB 2010

[www.hasbro.de](http://www.hasbro.de)

### EVALUATION

Action- and acquisition game  
For children  
Move bowl, catch eggs

#### Comments

Adult assistance necessary for  
assembly  
Funny idea  
Lavish game unit  
Very simple rules  
Batteries needed

#### Compares to

Hungry Hungry Hippo and  
other action games with  
marble acquisition





## DIE MAGIER

RIVALS FOR THE KING'S FAVOR

10+

**Die Magier** is the first game in a lovely, attractive series of games linked by design and theme, together with Feuersalamander and Das Blaue Amulett. All three games were first published between 1985 and 1987 and have been re-published in nearly identical design on occasion of the 25 year jubilee. Die Magier is still a beautiful game, still a good

game and a game for only three players.

Players are magicians on the hunt for the 7 lost cards from the King's tarot game. They are accompanied by their apprentices and search for the cards at 7 magical locations. The basic mechanisms are rolling the dice, move your magician and/or apprentice, fight another magician



for a card and a magic roll. There are only 2x7 cards available for three players, so you have to confront other magicians to win cards from them. The dice have the shape of rune sticks, show eyes and symbols and are thrown. You take the dice, make an eye throw and move your magician and your apprentice. The apprentice moves the sum of the eyes thrown on the paths and may enter magic squares. A magician jumps from one magic square to the next and may not step on the paths. He moves the number of eyes on the stick of his colour. If magician and apprentice meet on a magic square the magician gets a card. If a magician fights another the winner gets a card from the loser. Finally the apprentice can make a magic throw on symbol spots. Due to the number of players alliances change continually in the quest for the tarot cards. If you own a complete set of 7 cards you have won.

### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
3

AGE  
10+

TIME  
60+

**Designer:** M. und J. Rüttinger

**Artist:** not stated

**Distribution:** Simba Toys

**Price:** je ca. 30,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Noris Spiele 2010

[www.noris-spiele.de](http://www.noris-spiele.de)

### EVALUATION

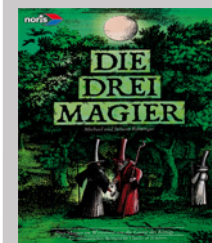
Dice and set collection game  
For families  
Move, confront other magicians

#### Comments

Re-Edition for the 25 year jubilee  
For three players only  
Very pretty design  
Standard mechanisms

#### Compares to

Basically All dice and set collection games



## GRIMAFFEN

CLAP YOUR HANDS, SHOW YOUR TEETH

5+

The monkey gang in the zoo monkeys about! Players embody the funny little monkeys and try to imitate sounds and gestures as exactly as possible and in the correct order. The image discs are sorted according to their backside colour and stacked face down. If you are the last one to have eaten a banana, you begin: You

roll the die and turn over the top disc from the stack in the colour shown on the die. If you roll a banana you may choose a disc. Disc colours correspond to different kinds of monkey business: Monkey around with your hands, make the noise, pull monkey faces, make the animal sound or monkey about with your arms. Now you mimic the



monkey business on the disc you turned over. When you have finished, you turn the disc face-down again. All other players in their turn roll the die and turn up a corresponding disc. If a stack is finished, choose any other stack. You add the new disc face-up to the row of others and must now mimic all the monkey business on all face-down tiles in correct order. If you manage all monkey business correctly you turn the open-faced tile back over and pass the turn to the next player. If you make a mistake you are out of the game! The next player continues with the tile you turned over! The last player still in play wins the game and is crowned Monkey King. Grimaffen is a nice fast game. The monkey faces are fun to make, the images on the discs are self-explaining and the correct mimicking is easily checked by the other players. Motor skills, observation and memory are the skills trained in this game within the Clever maker learning game series.

### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-6

AGE  
5+

TIME  
20+

**Designer:** Reiner Knizia

**Artist:** Dynamo

**Distribution:** Speciality store

**Price:** ca. 13,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Selecta 2010

[www.selecta-spielzeug.de](http://www.selecta-spielzeug.de)

### EVALUATION

Memory and mimicking game  
For Children  
Perform mimicking tasks in order

#### Comments

Simple mechanisms  
Pretty, self-explaining motives  
Series Clevermacher Lernspiele  
Multilingual rules

#### Compares to

Grimassimix

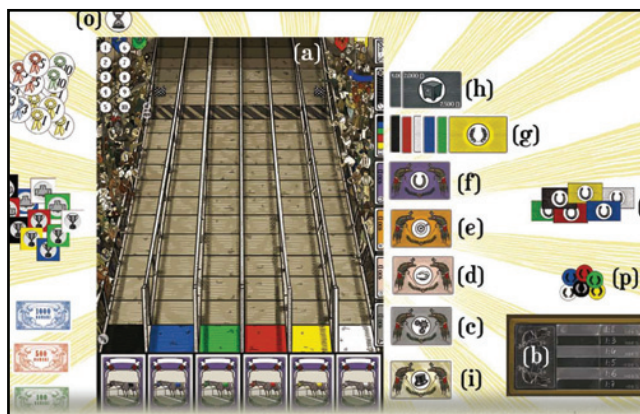


# HORSE FEVER

GETTING RICH BY BETTING ON HORSES

Players are rich and want to become the „Best Better Ever“. So you try to place the best bets in a pre-set number of rounds to win victory points and money. To do so you must fix races, buy horses and stables, pay your assistants, win auctions and take out loan from the bookies. The rounds comprise the phases 1 – Purchase, you buy horses,

stables, assistants, target cards or action cards and take out loans; 2 – Betting and race fixing; 3 – Race and a 4 – Auction, you can sell or buy a victory point for money in auctions. The interesting features are the fixing of the race and the race itself. Fixing happens by playing action cards next to the horses after the first round of bets. You must play all



action cards that you hold. Then a second betting round follows. The race is a two-part affair. First the action cards with the horses are turned up and implemented. Then horses are moved by turning up one movement card after the other, horses are moved according to their odds, as stated on the card. After each card the two Sprint Dice are rolled and the result is implemented. When each horse has passed the finish line, the bets are paid out and then the odds adjusted for the next round. At the end you pay back the loans plus interest; if you do not have enough money, you lose immediately. Then victory points are scored from all your assets. The rules list variants for a shorter family game and a party game.

Horse Fever is a very well made and well working simulation, with the right amount of luck thrown in and a lot of tactics, combined with period touches and lots of fun, especially in the party variant.

## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-5

AGE  
10+

TIME  
90+

**Designer:** L. Silva, L. T. Sorrentino

**Artist:** G. Ghigini, A. F. Ferrara

**Distribution:** Heidelbergberger

**Price:** ca. 35,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Cranio Creations 2009

[www.craniocreations.com](http://www.craniocreations.com)

## EVALUATION

Horse race game  
With friends  
Buy and run horses, fix race, bet

### Comments

Topic very nicely transferred to the game - Good, compact rules in four languages - Well-working simulation  
Variants for a family game and a party game

### Compares to

Win, place & Show, Kopf an Kopf and other horse racing games



# KARIBA

JOSTLING FOR ROOM AT THE WATER

7+

African animals meet at Lake Kariba. Space is scarce and the animals jostle and push other animals away to reach the water. 72 cards show 9 different animals, each animal is marked with a number – the higher the number the stronger the animal! Numbers begin at 1 for the mouse and go up to 4 for the Zebra or 6 for the buffalo to 9 for

the elephant. Cards are shuffled and 5 dealt to each player, the rest is stacked for a draw pile. You play one or several cards of the same animal and place them in the grass at the position with the animal's number. If three or more of these animals are now present, they chase away weaker animals of a lower number directly next to them. Should the

immediate neighbouring position be empty of animals, you cannot chase away any animal, as any animal can only chase away its direct neighbour. BUT the mouse with 1 chases away the elephant with 9. If you were able to chase away animals, you pick them up and place them on the table in front of you. At the end of your turn replenish your hand to hold 5 cards again.

If you play your last card, you end the game, the player with the most cards before him wins. The rules recommend to play 3 rounds and to make a note of the number of cards. After three rounds the player with the highest total score wins.

Kariba offers a very nice and attractive variant of a well-known mechanism. It is fun to play and a little planning is possible, if you pay a lot of attention and try to count the number of cards played. This will enable you to make good use of your cards at the right time!



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
7+

TIME  
15+

**Designer:** Reiner Knizia

**Artist:** unstated

**Distribution:** Piatnik

**Price:** ca. 25,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Goliath Toys 2010

[www.goliathgames.de](http://www.goliathgames.de)

## EVALUATION

Card collecting game  
For families  
Play, take other cards as a result

### Comments

Very attractive components  
Well-known topic ideally implemented  
Simple rules  
Nice family game

### Compares to

Variants of Scissor-Stone-Paper





## KÖNNEN SCHWEINE FLIEGEN?

DISCOVER ANIMALS AND  
THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

5↑

24 characteristics are listed in the game, connected to varying aspects of animal life: It lays eggs, has 2, 4 or 6 legs, has a fur, can fly, lives in groups, has a peak, is an endangered or extinct species, has a carapace, is night-active and so on. These characteristics are laid out in a circle within easy reach of all players. The animal cards are stacked face down.

Within the circle you place the track. Each player takes a pig and four chips of the same colour, the pigs are placed on the cloud spots of the track. In each round one animal is turned up from the stack. If you discern a fitting characteristic, you place your chip on it. When two players want to mark the same card the faster one may do so. Each



player may place all his chips, but only one chip can be placed on a card.

Then you control the answers in the solution booklet: For each correctly marked characteristic you advance your pig one step, for each falsely marked characteristic you move one step back. The player farthest advanced on the track after five rounds wins the game. The rule book states variants for younger players from age 3 and for getting acquainted with the game.

In this edition, too, this game is ideally suited for a family game a fast and highly interesting introduction for children into the fascination world of animals. The game also is. For the first game with children of preschool-age supervision is necessary, you need to explain the characteristics. The solutions can be used and understood without reading abilities. With some animals speed is essential, because for them very few characteristics are listed.

### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
5+

TIME  
15+

**Designer:** Sonja Häßler

**Artist:** F. Scheinberger, R. Mörtl

**Distribution:** Kauftart

**Price:** ca. 20,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Kosmos 2010

[www.kosmos.de](http://www.kosmos.de)

### EVALUATION

Quiz game  
For children  
Mark animal characteristics

#### Comments

New edition - Lots of information in the solution booklet - Self-monitoring is possible - Trains observation and reaction

#### Compares to

Können Schweine fliegen  
Small game, other quiz games on animals



## MY VERY FIRST GAMES

GAMES FOR TODDLERS

Alternate Name: *Meine ersten Spiele*

2↑

The series „my very first games“ features simple games to teach adhering to rules and to train colour recognition, fine motor skills and symbol and pattern recognition. Materials and components are made fitting to age and are lovely to touch and feel.

**Bauen & Stapeln Zoolino** uses a die and three animals made up from three pieces 1 in each

colour. 1, 2, 3 – *große Sammelei*: The animals are stacked according to colour. You roll the die and take the top piece for this animal. When all pieces are given out, the player with most pieces wins. *Und weg ist das Tier*: Each player gets a piece in each colour and sets up the animal. Then you roll the die and may set aside the top piece of your animal, if the colour



fits. The first player to be rid of his animal wins.

**Gute Nacht** – A role playing game as a bedtime story and two colour dice games: 1, 2, 3 *Schlaf, Träumerle, schlaf* – you roll the die and place Träumerle on this cloud bed. If a star is on the bed you take it. When all stars are given out, the player with most stars wins. *Sternenhimmel* – all stars are distributed among the players, you roll the die and place Träumerle on the next cloud of this colour. If a star is on the cloud, you may set a star into the sky. If you are out of stars first, you win.

**Stoff-Memo Paulina** – Beautiful cloth pictures and two sets of rules: *Paulinas Pferdeparade* – one image of a pair is turned up, the other one turned over. You point to an open card and turn up one of the covered ones. With very small children you can turn up a covered one and let them point to the open one. *Paulina-Memo* uses standard memory rules.

### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
1-4

AGE  
2+

TIME  
5+

**Designer:** Haba Team

**Artist:** I. Frömelt, S. Krinke

**Distribution:** Game stores

**Price:** je ca. 20,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Haba 2010

[www.haba.de](http://www.haba.de)

### EVALUATION

Würfel- und Lernspiel  
Für Kinder  
Verschiedene, meist Farbwürfel

#### Comments

Supervision necessary  
Components adapted to target group age  
Very simple rules  
Trains first adhering to rules

#### Compares to

Other games of the series



# MEINE FREUNDIN CONNI

CONNI IM KINDERGARTEN



Conni is a character in the stories by Liane Schneider, published at Carlsen Verlag. After „Conni kommt in die Schule“ a second game now features Conni in a collection of educational games, called „Conni kommt in den Kindergarten“, aimed at pre-school children and offering training of shapes, colours and motor skills. **Bunte Kindergartentasche** is

a collecting game, the spinner points at a shape in the topic ring. If the shape is missing you can place it. If is not missing anymore, you can look underneath the crocodile – if you find Cat Mau you may take any item.

**Conni findet was** is a move and search game. Conni points to an item on the topic ring. This item must be found on the „teeming“

picture and marked with the magnifying glass. In a variant all search simultaneously for the item. **Lustige Fotosuche** uses the topic ring to determine an image, this image must be set into the picture. A variant uses the „teeming“ pictures too. Images are hidden beneath them and are asked for if you do not find them under your own picture. **Flinkes Aufräumspiel** is a memory game. Conni points out a colour in the topic ring, players try to find the colours on the back sides of the items, corresponding items are placed into the bag board.

On the spinner, crocodile Fridolin always sits above the correct picture or image, this self-monitoring mechanism is very attractive and easy to handle. All the games are simple and easily understood, the components are pretty and made to children's needs and Conni as an identification character makes the games more interesting.



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
1-4

AGE  
3+

TIME  
10+

**Designer:** Kai Haferkamp

**Artist:** Freudenreich, Wenzel-Bürger

**Distribution:** Kauffert

**Price:** ca. 25,00 Euro

**Publisher:** KOSMOS 2010

[www.kosmos.de](http://www.kosmos.de)

## EVALUATION

A set of educational games  
For children  
Combine colours and shapes

### Comments

Conni as identification character  
Beautiful material, good to handle  
Pretty design and components  
Variants listed  
Can be played alone

### Compares to

Other educational games  
on the topics



# MIMIK MEMO

TRAINING FOR LIP AND TONGUE  
MOTOR ACTIVITY

3+

At long last making faces is allowed! 16 different animal heads make the most diverse, diverting and different faces, each of them is in the pack twice, once on a tile with a blue border and once on a tile with a green border. Furthermore, there are one dice, one monkey pawn and 24 banana cards in the box.

For the game variant **Monkey**

**Theatre** you pick out the same 8 animals twice, shuffle all of them and place them face down depending on colour border. 15 banana cards are placed in a row to make a path; the monkey stands on the first card. You turn up a green card and all players make the face from the card. Then you turn up a blue card. If you have found a pair, you keep it. If you

did not find a pair, you roll the die and the monkey moves along the banana path. If all pairs are found before the monkey reaches the end of the path all players have won together.

For a play of **Who will be Banana King?** you place 8 animal tiles face down, the green tiles for the same animals are placed open around the blue tiles, the monkey starts on any green tile. You roll the die, move the monkey and make the face of the animal reached. Then you turn up one of the blue tiles and receive a banana card for each pair found. If you turned up a wrong animal, all players imitate the face of the animal on the blue card. The first player to have collected three cards wins the game.

Mimik Memo offers a very well-made combination of the easy memo mechanism with training for lips and tongue, the mirror offers the opportunity for children to play alone and to control the faces.



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-6

AGE  
3-8

TIME  
15+

**Designer:** Markus Nikisch

**Artist:** Annet Rudolph

**Distribution:** Game stores

**Price:** ca. 6,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Haba 2010

[www.haba.de](http://www.haba.de)

## EVALUATION

Cooperative memo/mimic game  
For children  
Make faces, find pairs

### Comments

Nice combination of mechanisms  
Cooperative control of the faces -  
Difficulty level adjustable by number of cards

### Compares to

Grimassimix and other  
mimic games





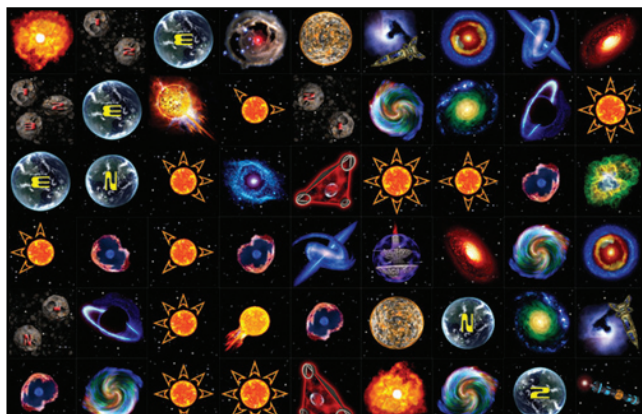
## SECTOR 41

THE GLYNIUM WARS

Sector 41 is a dangerously unstable galactic sector and nobody knows whether it is supposedly cursed since eternity or if you can have a very unstable and immensely valuable element there – Glynium! Players are rivaling races on the hunt for Glynium. The board is laid out from 81 face-down tiles, the middle one is turned up and holds the Guardian. Mother

Ships carrying explorers start in the middle of the four sides. You transport Glynium to the Mother Ship with your explorers and score points for the Glynium colour.

A turn has the Phases Mother Ship, Explorer - with Combat and Glynium transport - and Guardian. The Mother Ship moves up to two steps along the side of the



board. You also can fold space by using the Mother Ship tile to push forward a complete column and then place the pushed-out tile in front of your Mother Ship, which is then back where it was. An explorer moves in any directions, can turn up tiles and implement them. The Guardian is a random factor, he accelerates during the game, turns up tiles and can remove Glynium or explorers from the game. The game ends, when nobody can catch up with the current leader, or when all Glynium has been collected. The player with most points wins.

Topic and basic mechanisms aren't new, but nicely combined. Folding space and the Guardian are especially neat and can wreak havoc with your plans. Tiles are text-free and you must consult a list to find out what they do, it takes a few games to remember their functions and to be able to plan a bit. All in all a neat game that can get lengthy in the end. The rules list some variants.

### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
12+

TIME  
90+

**Designer:** M. Lachtanski, D. Long

**Artist:** not stated

**Distribution:** Verlag

**Price:** ca. 35,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Scimitar Games 2009

[www.scimitargames.com](http://www.scimitargames.com)

### EVALUATION

SciFi themed game  
With friends  
Move, use tiles, collect items

#### Comments

Variable board  
English language edition only  
German rules available  
Short basic rule, lots of tile explanation - Can be lengthy towards the end

**Compares to**  
All SciFi-Games



## SPACE PIRATES

THE UNIVERSE IS YOUR HUNTING GROUND

Alternate Name: Raumpiraten

Players are space pirates and chase space freighters to loot their load of minerals, precious metals, high-tech components or diamond salts. The universe is laid out randomly on a smooth surface, pirate ships start in the space shipyards. And here comes the first surprise of the game, the freighters are moved by snipping them across the table. You play

an energy card and first enact the events noted on the card. Then you move your ship using movement tiles as stated on the cards. You place them starting at your ship next to each other, each one can be shifted a maximum of 90° compared to the previous one. So you lay out the flight path and move your ship to the end. If a movement tile



partially or completely covers a freighter, you have entered it and search the load. Goods you keep, an asteroid damages your ship and you may encounter the Galactic Police. If you meet the police you can do nothing else but fly to the next shipyard and pay your penalty to get rid of the police. If you are out of energy cards or a blocked your ship drifts. In the shipyards you can buy the yard or look at market cards, sell your load or fuel your ship. If you own a shipyard and have amassed a capital of 20 Mega-Credits you win.

This game basically uses standard topics with standard, card driven mechanisms. But the fun lays in the tabletop elements of moving the ships. The snipping of the freighters influences the game massively. You can place a freighter ideally for your ship to encounter, but can take penalty for overturning the freighter or shooting it out of the known universe.

### INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
8+

TIME  
60+

**Designer:** Christophe Boelinger

**Artist:** C. Madura, F. Condette

**Distribution:** Hutter / Piatnik

**Price:** ca. 30,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Sirius / Zvezda 2009

[www.hutter.net](http://www.hutter.net)

### EVALUATION

SciFi-Tabletop  
With friends  
Move ship, use cards

#### Comments

A fun and interesting combination of elements  
Very beautiful components  
Good rules

**Compares to**  
Tabletops, SciFi games and all card-driven games



# SPIEL DES WISSENS

PLANET ERDE  
THE QUIZ GAME FOR ALL THE FAMILY

8+

In this special edition of *Spiel des Wissens*, based on the BBC TV series and the film of the same name, players travel round our planet. To be able to travel the must be able to answer questions. In this edition questions come from a general category called Nature and from 6 special so called *worlds* – mountain world, jungle world, ice world,

cave world, deep sea world and desert world. On each question cards questions are separated into an easy and a hard section, two in each section. At the start of the game players decide together who gets which difficulty level throughout the game. Before each question the player decides if wants to answer question 1 or question 2 on the card.



You roll the die, move and answer a question. A wrong answer ends your move immediately and you must either stop on the small spots, or go back two positions from a so called explorer spot or even go back 7 position from one or the world spots. In your turn you can up to three times roll the die, move and answer correctly. If you manage that, you get another free roll + move. If you reach a world spot, you must stop and – in case of a correct answer – you can pick up a world ring for your pawn. Special rules apply for the finish area beyond the deep see world. If you reach the finish first with 6 rings on your pawn you win. *Spiel des Wissens* is and has been always a good game, and so is this special edition. The selection of questions is especially good and interesting here. And having to move back for a wrong answer really hurts! A nice detail is the rules table for what happens on what kind of spot in case of a wrong or right answer. All in all the game is as interesting and informative as the series.

## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-6

AGE  
8+

TIME  
60+

**Designer:** unstated

**Artist:** unstated

**Distribution:** Gubic

**Price:** ca. 20,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Jumbo 2010

[www.jumbo.eu](http://www.jumbo.eu)

## EVALUATION

Quiz game  
For families  
Roll, move, answer correctly

### Comments

Special edition for the series  
Well-known basic mechanisms  
Rules in the shape of a table  
Questions in two levels of difficulty

### Compares to

Other editions of *Spiel des Wissens* and other quiz and trivia games



# tiptoi

AUDIODIGITAL LEARNING



6+

Learning system with self-monitoring of answers have for decades been favourites for children and parents alike, already since the times of Elektrokontakt – if you touch the right contacts, a little lamp alights!

Ravensburger has now transferred this basic principle for the 21st century – tiptoi is an audio-digital learning method

based on OID technology. The optical sensor transforms invisible codes into sound.

If you tap on book pages or game boards with the tiptoi pen, the pen asks questions, confirms correct answers, tells stories, relays information and leads through challenging puzzles and scanning games.

The pen can be used for four

newly developed Wieso? We-shalb? Warum? Books, five educational games and even an interactive globe based on the puzzleball system.

For easy entry into the system two starter sets are available, one pen+book, one pen+game. If you want to use further books or games, you download the necessary files via USB-cable onto the pen, free of charge. The book starter set includes *Entdecke den Bauernhof*, the titles of the other books are *Die Welt der Musik*, *Sicher im Straßenverkehr* and *Entdecke den Flughafen*.

The game *Die Englisch-Detektive* is included in the game starter set, the other games are called *Das Geheimnis der Zahleninsel*, *Magors Lesezauber*, *Reise durch die Jahreszeiten* and *Abenteuer Tierwelt*. Of course book and game from the starter set are available without pen. The globe adds the challenge of first puzzling it together correctly. tiptoi is a fascinating system allowing for individual speed and self-reliant learning and providing lots of fun.



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
1-4

AGE  
6-10

TIME  
var

**Designer:** several

**Artist:** several

**Distribution:** Ravensburger

**Price:** ca. 20,00 bis 40,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Ravensburger 2010

[www.ravensburger.de](http://www.ravensburger.de)

## EVALUATION

Educational system  
For children  
Use pen, react to pen

### Comments

New technology  
Impressive combination of possibilities to use  
Easy to play alone

### Compares to

New product





# TOMB: CRYPTMASTER

RAID THE CRYPT. GAIN EXPERIENCE

Tomb Cryptmaster is another game in the Tomb series, independent and yet fully compatible with the original game. You lead a team of adventurers into a tomb to explore ancient crypts. This version puts the emphasis on the Cryptmaster opposing the players and introduces two new card types – Curses and Overlords.

The crypts are prepared at the beginning of the game and you recruit your team in the inn. This is also the place to study new tactics, learn spells, gather equipment or plot against other parties. A turn consists of: Use free actions, use turn action and End of turn. Free actions come from your hand or are standard ones like equip, share, bank, rest or

dispel curse. Turn actions again are either card actions or any of the following: draw, recruit, move, heal, pickpocket, return to the inn (flee) or raid a crypt. At the end of the turn mercenaries are paid and team members are replaced or dismissed. Combat and other decisions are based on the roll of dice and character-specific values. When all crypts have been raided and are empty, the game ends and the winner is the player with most experience points.

Tomb: Cryptmaster seamlessly fits into the series of all those Fantasy Dungeon Crawls, that try since the appearance of Dungeons & Dragons to bring the role playing games of that genre to the board with a sensible amount of time needed to play. Tomb Cryptmaster is beautifully made, with attractive components and a good rule, a worthy addition of the library of any fan of dice- and card-driven Fantasy Dungeon Crawls.



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-6

AGE  
12+

TIME  
120+

**Designer:** Brent Keith

**Artist:** Carl Frank und andere

**Distribution:** Pegasus

**Price:** ca. 47,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Alderac 2009

[www.alderac.com](http://www.alderac.com)

## EVALUATION

Fantasy Dungeon Crawl  
With friends

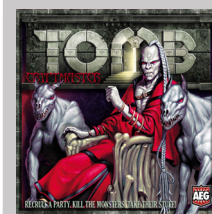
Move, use actions, follow cards

### Comments

Standard Dungeon Crawl  
Beautiful components and graphics  
Lots of in-game text  
English edition only

### compares to

Doom, Descent and others



# VOLLDAMPF VORAUS!

TRAIN READY FOR DEPARTURE!

5+

The three train engines on the station board of each player need wagons. The game holds tiles with the three different kinds of wagons, plus three conductors, two crane wagons and two junction operators. All wagons are shuffled and placed face down, four cards are turned up. You start the game by taking one wagon card and placing it next

to the corresponding engine on your station board. A crane car is a joker and can replace any wagon; a junction operator allows you to steal a card from a fellow player. Then the operator is discarded for this round. A wagon card showing the conductor cannot be taken; it stays on the table face up. The next and all other players after him first turn

up a card and then choose one of the four cards. When the first player has a complete train on his card, he stacks the wagon cards next to his board and takes the wooden engine. Any other player completing a train stacks it in the same way; the second and third trains are stacked on top of the first stack. After each completed train the stacks are compared and the wooden engine goes to the player with the highest stack. When the third conductor is turned up, the round ends. The player who currently holds the wooden engine receives a glass nugget. All cards are reshuffled for the next round. You win the game, if you collect your second nugget. Volldampf voraus is a very simple easy game with very simple rules and a random only mechanism. This simple mechanism allows children to play alone after having the game explained, or younger children can play when assisted.



## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
5+

TIME  
15+

**Designer:** Thilo Hutzler

**Artist:** Peter Braun

**Distribution:** Game stores

**Price:** ca. 9,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Haba 2009

[www.haba.de](http://www.haba.de)

## EVALUATION

Set collection with railway topic  
For children

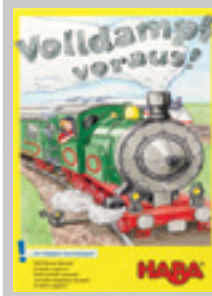
Place tiles for complete trains

### Comments

Rather abstract set collection despite railway topic - Very pretty components - Random mechanism only

### Compares to

Each random set collection games



# WILDE BANDE

KROKODIL DOES NOT GO WITH ELEPHANT

5+

Lion, elephant, crocodile, giraffe, shark, zebra and ostrich banded together and roam the savannahs, but for tourists they smile peacefully for a picture. The cards are shuffled, each player receives 6 cards. The first two players place one animal each from their hand on the table. Then in turn each player placed

an animal on one of the stacks and draws a card. You must place an animal that is the same as one on the stacks. You can also place a tourist as a joker or play the card with the animal group to change the kind of animal you need to play. Of course you can play tourist on tourist or tourist on an animal group or animal



group on tourist or animal group on animal group. If you cannot play any of these cards you pass for the round and keep your remaining cards. The last one in play receives all cards in the two discard stacks. Then all take up their cards again for the next round. When the draw pile is finished play goes one till someone wins the two discard stacks. This player also gets all hand cards from all players. You win, if you have most cards.

The common mechanisms to discard cards has been varied very nicely, the discarding in turn takes away the hurry. The solutions for not being able to play any card as well as for the end of the round and end of the game are very nice, too. This sweet little and quick card game fills exactly the demands set for the series "Der kleine Amigo Spielspaß für Groß & Klein": Simple rules, lots of fun, nice design, easy to carry around. And as in all games of the series the fluffy plush star mascot is included.

## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-4

AGE  
5+

TIME  
15+

**Designer:** Haim Shafir

**Artist:** Jackie Stafford

**Distribution:** Berg Toy

**Price:** ca. 10,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Amigo Spiele 2010

[www.amigo-spiele.de](http://www.amigo-spiele.de)

## EVALUATION

Card placement game  
For children  
Place cards on demand

### Comments

Series: Der kleine Amigo Spielspaß für Groß & Klein - Very pretty version of a well-known card placement mechanism - No speed factor

### Compares to

Uno and other games with discarding of cards on demand



# ZOOLORETTO MINI

ERDMÄNNCHEN, GIRAFFE OR IMPALA

7+

You own a zoo and try to fill the enclosures with animals and to beautify them with landscape tiles to score points. Spare animals must be placed in the barn and deduct points from your score at the end.

Animal and landscape tiles are shuffled face down into a common pile, the offspring animals are placed open-faced. For each

player you place a transport wagon on the table, the number of available animals is adjusted to the number of players and you also prepare an end-of-game stack of tiles.

You play in rounds: Each player must either place a tile onto a wagon or take any wagon and pass for the round. To place a tile you draw one from the bag



and put it on any of the wagons. If you take a wagon you must place the animals on it in your zoo, following detailed rules. If two animals of a kind are together in an enclosure they produce offspring. If you fill the last spot in an enclosure, you have a bonus action. When all players have taken a lorry, a new round starts. When the first tile of the end-of-game stack is turned up, the round is finished and then the game is scored. Each enclosure scores you points depending on the kind animals in it, each landscape scores you 2 points. Animal or landscape tiles that you had to place in the barn reduce your score by 2 points for each tile.

Zooloretto mini is a simplified version of Zooloretto. The money transactions have been left out, as have been the visitors and the zoo expansions. This short version plays simpler and more clearly laid out, it is a fantastic fast family game and a good entry game into the Zooloretto Universe.

## INFORMATION

PLAYERS  
2-5

AGE  
7+

TIME  
30+

**Designer:** Michael Schacht

**Artist:** Design/Main

**Distribution:** Piatnik

**Price:** ca. 16,00 Euro

**Publisher:** Abacusspiele 2010

[www.abacusspiele.de](http://www.abacusspiele.de)

## EVALUATION

Placement game  
For families  
Place tiles, score points

### Comments

Short version of Zooloretto  
Without money, visitors are expansions  
Very easy to play  
Short playing time

### Compares to

Zooloretto, Aquaretto





**ACTIVITY MY FIRST**

Publisher: Piatnik  
Designer: Hablit, Eberl, Catty

4↑

The elephants „Lila“ and „Grün“ are on their way to the lake. The variable board allows a short or a longer game. Children play in two teams following the usual rules of Activity. When the term is guessed correctly the elephant goes to the next colour square corresponding to the one shown on the card. Terms are illustrated with pictures. Activity My First is a very well working version for small children, which also should work well for children in their first years of school. New edition of „Activity Kinder“.



A game of communication for 3-16 children, ages 4 and up

**GEOMETRY PIRATES MINI**

Publisher: Haba  
Designer: Wolfgang Dirscherl

5↑

A set of games on the topic of geometry in the series „LernSpielSpaß“, based on the game „Geometry Pirates“. Players have found the treasure of Pirat Geometricus and play several games with it. Depending on the game you use area shapes or spatial shapes, the games demand either finding of shapes using a memo mechanism or recognizing forms when asked or finding / recognizing which forms are missing. For an advanced version the area and special shapes can be mixed.

Alternate Name: Geometrie-Piraten



A set of learning games for 2-4 players, ages 5 and up

**HALLI GALLI DELUXE**

Publisher: Amigo  
Designer: Haim Shafir

6↑

A pretty and colourful fruit salad of bananas, strawberries, plums and lemons is distributed among all players. You turn up the top card of your stack. When you spot five identical fruits around the table, you must hit the bell instantly. The fastest player receives all open discard piles and places all cards under his stack. If you make a mistake, you must give one card to each player. If you are out of cards, you must quit the game. When only two players are left, they play for the two remaining stacks. After that the player with most cards wins the game. Luxury edition in a tin box.



A game of reaction for 2-6 players, ages 6 and up

**MAGIC POTION**

Publisher: Fun Frag  
Designer: Veronique Debroise

7↑

Magic Potion is a wonderful childrens' version of Mastermind. Players are supposed to find the secret formula of the magic potion. The potion always contains a toad, a leaf and a flower, either in red, lilac or green. Merlin gives hints, if a recipe is correct. Therefore you need a maximum of 9 recipes to find the correct formula. Players alternate in being Merlin and setting task for the other player. Merlin answers to a formula card with number cards 0,1, or 2 depending on the number of corresponding ingredients. If you need fewer questions to find 3 recipes you win.

Alternate Name: Potion Magique



A game of logic for 2 players, ages 7 and up

**NMBRS!**

Publisher: A&JK Productions  
Designer: Korneel Joppe

7↑

The game comprises number cards from 1-100, each with a scoring value between 1 and 3. You start with 7 cards and a score of 50. You must lay a minimum of three cards in a logical sequence, e.g. 2-4-8-16. You may add cards to already laid-out sequences and you may connect sequences. If you have laid out cards, their scoring value is added to your total score. If you lay out all cards you end the round and all players deduct the scoring values of their remaining cards from their total. If you reach or top 100, you win.



A game on numbers for 2-8 players, ages 7 and up

**RUPERT BÄR DOMINO**

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele

3↑

28 domino cards feature Rupert Bear and his friends Edward, Bill, Ping Pong, Raggety, Ming und Miranda. As in any other domino game the tiles are dealt to the players, depending on the number of players you receive between 4 and 8 cards. One player starts the game by placing one tile, the others place tiles at either end of the queue. If you cannot place a tile, you draw a tile. You win, if you are the first to place all your tiles. Edition packed in a tin.



A game of placement for 2-6 players, ages 3 and up

**SET**

Publisher: Ravensburger  
Designer: Marsha Falco

81 cards differ in number, colour, form and filling of the symbols. A set exists if on three cards each of these four characteristics, scanned separately, is either completely identical or completely different. Players look for sets in a display of 3x4 cards that is always refilled when a set is taken away. Not an easy game, as it needs a lot of getting used to controlling each characteristic separately in this challenging game of observation and fast reactions.



A game of scanning and logic for 2-8 players, ages 10 and up

**SMARTPHONE**

Publisher: Smartgames/Jumbo  
Designer: Raf Peeters

7↑

A logic puzzle in the shape of a folding telephone and bearing a name that is program: Smartphone. 32 puzzles are listed on four cards, always in the shape of a 5 digit number and a name. The number must be formed by moving parts on the keyboard of the phone. The puzzles are assigned to difficulty levels from Starter to Master. A fun and challenging set of puzzles, for in between or on the road, easy to carry and hard to solve.



A set of logic puzzles for 1 player, ages 7 and up

**TOP TRUMPS SPECIALS BEN 10 ALIEN FORCE**

Publisher: Winning Moves

8↑

Choosing your card's best attribute, beating (trumping) your opponent's card, and winning the cards played in the round – already a Classic! Cards are dealt evenly to all players. The active player chooses an attribute on his top card (no shuffling of the deck!) and calls out the corresponding value – all other players check their cards for the value for this attribute – the player with the highest value gets all cards of this round. In case of a tie cards go on the table and the winner of the next round receives those too. Many theme sets, this edition: „Ben 10 Alien Force“.



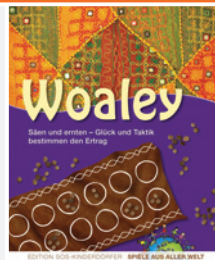
Card/Quiz game for 2 or more players from age 8

**WOALEY**

Publisher: Grubbe Media

6↑

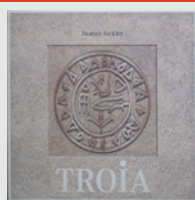
Edition SOS-Kinderdörfer – Games around the World – Sierra Leone: A version of Hus – Mancala – Oware – Bao, very often also called pit or bean game, widespread in the tropic belt around the world. You start with 5 pebbles/beans/shells/pieces per pit. In your turn you take all items from one of your pits in the row in front of you and distribute the items one by one counter-clockwise to the following pits. When the last item ends up in an opposing pit with less than 4 items, you take the content of that pit. You win, if your opponent is out of items. Rules variants are listed.



A game of placement for 2 players, ages 6 and up

HUGO KASTNER RECOMMENDS

# TROIA

**Excavation through 5000 years**


Dear readers! Not only the history of Troy is unusual, but also the history of how this game of the same name, dedicated to archeological research, has come into existence. „Troia“ owes its creation by Thomas Fackler to an initiative of the Daimler Chrysler AG, an international corporation, that has been supporting digs in Troy since 1988. And Chrysler has not been stingy in the scientific support for the game either, because an international team of archeologists, lead by Prof. Dr. Manfred Korfmann, has tested parts of the game on location. As regards to historical authenticity Troy needs not fear any comparison. Thus the game has more than earned the special award „History in Games“, awarded by the „Jury Spiel des Jahres“ in the year 2001. A final remark: 1966 the countryside near Troy was declared a historical National Park, the location itself was added in 1998 to the honourable UNESCO list of „Cultural Heritage of Mankind“. If you are looking for a real rarity among games, you are cordially invited to a dig at the Austrian Games Museum in Leopoldsdorf.

Website: [www.spielen.at](http://www.spielen.at)

With more care and effort than usual the cone of light must illuminate the appropriate finds during the troublesome digs in the mythical Troy. You, in the guise as a hobby archeologist, try in one hour of game play to reveal the secrets of Troy using a combination of luck and deduction. Finds are researched, floor plans reconstruction, research results published, just as in real life. Your goal is to be before your rivals, especially in case of the main publications. This is not easy, because the digs on the hills „Troia I“, „Troia II“ and on top of that, „Troia VI“, „Troia VII“ and „Troia VIII/IX“, too, at first do not seem to be more than a mountain of debris. What else can you expect after 5000 years of history for this settlement? Each archeologist receives a license to dig and furthermore some maps that enable him to publish important finds.

The more such finds you manage to achieve and the earlier you are able to publish, the higher is the scientific value and your reputation and success in this game. To begin with, the finds hiding valuable secrets of the dig are carefully hidden behind a screen from the eyes of your rivals in this archeological race. What makes your job so immensely difficult is that you always may only pick up loose chunks of detritus. But your reward is huge, because step by step in the light of your publications as a hobby archeologist an image forms of the many-layered floor plans of this ancient settlement! Let yourself be inspired by the transcendence of this archeological time travel.

Remarks to: [Hugo.Kastner@spielen.at](mailto:Hugo.Kastner@spielen.at)

Homepage: [www.hugo-kastner.at](http://www.hugo-kastner.at)

**RECOMMENDATION #55**

PLAYERS

2-4

Designer: Thomas Fackler

Price: € 30,00

Year: 2000

Publisher: DaimlerChrysler AG

AGE

9+

TIME

60+

Tactics Info+ Luck

„Troia“ is a well working mixture of tactical consideration, lucky moments in actual digging for wall parts and the well timed release of information in the shape of publications. The allure of this archeological board game, that has been awarded a price for its elegance is exceedingly high despite the unusual topic.

**Hugos EXPERTTIP**

In deviation of the usual routine an advice concerning the ambience for the game. Light is essential for digging enthusiasts, otherwise the level curves on the dig tiles are hard to discern. In any case a glass of wine for the mature experts on the digging site cannot come amiss. Furthermore, Troia is ideally suited for a rival digging „pas a deux“, I would recommend 2 persons as an ideal number for a first game of Troia.

**Hugos FLASLIGHT**

„Troia“ is a real eyecatcher that can trigger a real feeling of discovery with the right playing partners. This also thanks to the wonderful information brochure on the subject and the drawings of the historic floor plans of this ancient settlement, that have been integrated into the game. A simple but fitting mechanism allows each family member to delve deeply into the fascinating world of archeology after a first training dig.

**PREVIEW:**

TEXAS HOLD`EM

Start of the Pokermania


**IMPRESSUM**

**Offenlegung nach dem Mediengesetz:** Medieninhaber, Eigentümer, Verleger und Hersteller: Verein „Österreichisches Spiele Museum“, vertreten durch Obfrau Dipl.Ing. Dagmar de Cassan, Raasdorferstrasse 28, 2285 Leopoldsdorf im Marchfelde, Telefon 02216-7000, Fax 02216-7000-3, mail-to: [office@spielen.at](mailto:office@spielen.at), Internet: [www.gamesjournal.at](http://www.gamesjournal.at) - [www.gamesjournal.at](http://www.gamesjournal.at) - Chefredakteur: **Dipl.Ing. Dagmar de Cassan**

**Blattlinie:** Die Blattlinie ist die Meinung aller Redakteure, freien Mitarbeitern und Gastautoren. Die Spiele zur Erstellung der Rezensionen stellt das Österr. Spiele Museum für die Dauer der Arbeit kostenlos zur Verfügung. Niemand erhält Sach-, Service-, Geldleistungen von den Verlagen. (Alle Rezensionen zu den Spielen in ALLES GESPIELT und in NEU EINGETROFFEN sind von Dagmar de Cassan) Deutsche Ausgaben Version 1.0 Copyright (c) 2010 by Spielen in Österreich - Die Spiele Collection, Spiele Kreis Wien, Österreichisches Spielefest, Spielefest, Wiener Spiele Akademie, Spiel der Spiele und zwei Spiele-Symbole sind eingetragene Warenzeichen.

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# Chocolate

GÜNTER BURKHARDT

WITH ART BY  
RYAN LAUKAT

