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INTERNATIONAL EDITION: IN THIS ISSUE WE PRESENT 55 GAMES

LLAND AHOY

SANTA CRUZ

LET US EXPLORE THIS ISLAND

8↑

According to the introductory text on the back of the box we plough the waves with her majesty's explorer ship. How could it be otherwise than that we want to discover rich raw material resources, fertile landscapes and exotic animals.

At least, this is the announcement; let's see how much of what is promised in those two sentences is kept in the game. After months full of privation, the text tells us, we catch sight of land. We have discovered Santa Cruz. Which Santa Cruz? The rules keep us in the dark on that point. Let's surf through Wikipedia and learn more. Maybe they are talking about an island in the Galapagos archipelago. To be more exact, the second biggest, but the one with the most population. This island has a similar silhouette to that of the island on the beautifully designed board, and is also dominated by a volcano in the center of the island and with a certain importance for the game. Two smaller islands, at the bottom and top left of the board, can also be explored. The main island and the two smaller islands are covered by a network of roads, and three rivers thread their way across the big island.

The reddish volcano tiles, the beige land tiles and the blue coastal tiles are shuffled and then placed face down on the spots of their kind. The round bird chips are shuffled too, but placed next to the board. Finally, the coastal tiles are turned up. Now the scoring cards are dealt to players, in numbers depending on the number players, 4/3/2 players receive 2/3/4 cards; players may look at those scoring cards. Then one player chooses one of four different sets of building cards, the others follow in clockwise direction. Each set is made up from seven cards: Set A is the River Set and contains 3 river cards, 2 path cards, 1 ship and 1 double move card. With his you will - or at least should try to - predominantly at river locations. Then there are the Path Set, the Ship Set and the Balanced Set. The player who took the last remaining set now begins the game, he disembarks. This first disembarkation is free. Each player in turn chooses a coastal tile, takes the building pictured on the tile from his stock and puts it on the coastal tile. For this he immediately scores the number

of points marked next to the building and marks them on the track. When a building has been placed you turn up the neighboring face-down tile.

Now the game starts; a turn is really simple: You choose a card from your hand, play it, for instance a ship card, choose a free coastal tile and again build the building shown on the tile, mark your points, and you are done. Next player. Again in clockwise direction. In order to build next to a river bed you must Correctly guessed! You must play a river card, but in addition to that you must already have built a building at this river. Then you can build in any location along this river, even if the chosen tile should still be face-down. In this case you turn it up and place the appropriate building. Should you be out of buildings of this sort ... tough luck! Next player, please! In case of a Path card you build more more reliably and with less risk, because you can only build adjacent to buildings and those tiles - correct! - are always turned over immediately. Or you play a scoring card.

The goal in Santa Cruz is to have collected most victory points at the end of the game. On the one hand this is achieved by building on tiles with high yields of points, up to 6 points, or on the other hand you try to play your scoring cards "at the right" time, that is, at a point in the game when you score best with them and your fellow players very little or not at all. It very rarely happens but can happen that another player scores more victory points than you do yourself. A scoring card, for instance, shows a sheep; if you have built a settlement showing a sheep you advance the number of points shown on the scoring cards. In turn all other players score that number of points, if they also did build this symbol. Finally, but only at the end of the game, you score points for the bird chips you did collect. Each of these chips has a value between 1 and 3 points. Those bird chips are acquired by building on a tile showing a bird symbol.

Can you still remember the first lines of this review? The exotic animals? Here they are at long last, the parrots, cockatoos and seagulls. More exotic animals are not available in this game, unless you have never encountered a sheep. Joking

aside, some players have laughing fits because they enjoy it so much when they play a scoring card and are the only ones who can score. But, in all earnest, Santa Cruz is not that funny!

To be on the safe side and to avoid such paroxysms of laughter, you try to see through your fellow players and build wood, sugar, gold, fish and sheep just in case or four houses or three different buildings and so on and so on ..! But not everything is possible, definitely not. But

Christian Huber

Santa Cruz scores with giving you a second chance to settle the island better at the second try!

you can try to interpret the moves of one's explorer competitors - ah, fellow players - in order to copy a move or in order to preempt a certain scoring card. For this the volcano tiles are a very nice tool, as they often show high numbers of points and, much more important, double symbols. Nice, but there is one certain, one and only one „evil“ scoring cards that makes the volcano erupt. This destroys all buildings on the volcano tiles, which cannot be placed again in this stage of the game. And as if it would not be enough to lose all symbols, each destroyed building loses you 2 points, too. This results in aghast groans of all fellow players!

When all players have played their last card, the first turn ends.

Dear reader, how often in your life did you wish for a second chance to do everything differently, if only you could? To get that second chance would be wonderful, but happens very rarely in real life. Here in this game, on Santa Cruz, Mister Casasola Merkle makes this possible, game after game, even if the logic of it escapes me.

In the second stage of the game players remove all their buildings from the board. All tiles remain in place in their current status, open-faced or face-down. And now players start the game again, including the choosing of card sets, albeit with one new scoring card drawn by each player. The player in last position on the scoring track chooses one of the card sets, including the scoring cards that go with it. He is of course allowed to take the set he played in the first stage of the game. It is possible that a player thinks that the result of the first stage was rather good! Finally, each player discards one of the scoring cards, of course face-down. So eventually four new scoring cards could be in play, which of course ruin an explorer's life, or more exactly,

the second chance to do better.

The second stage of the game is played exactly like the first one. At best you have remembered all scoring cards of your opponents and target certain scorings with your game, but it might happen that you waste your efforts because this scoring card has been taken out of the game. When the last card has been played in the second stage, you turn up and score the bird chips, beginning with the player who did play that last card. Whoever is in first position on the scoring track wins the game. In case of a tie the player who reached this position first, wins the game, because the others must line up behind him.

Conclusion

Santa Cruz plays nice and fast, there should be no large down-time. It is ideally suited for families and once-in-a-while gamers; therefore it will probably not attract many experienced players. But it is rumored that there are some experienced players around who like to play shorter games or games which contain a certain element of luck. To be lucky to a certain extent is not bad at all on Santa Cruz, for instance as regards to the bird chips, or when I build gold without any idea of what is to come and then another player plays his scoring card for gold! But luck or chance is not the dominant feature of the game. Each player must try to implement his strategy as best as he can with his cards in hand. You should try to cover as many eventualities as you can - wood, sugar, sheep ... etc.

The our explorers settle everything in sight and then, from one moment to the next, leave everything as it is, just to return and settle the island again, escapes my grasp and my logic. Maybe there is a virus on the rampage among the explorers ... malaria, smallpox, the plague ... Maybe hostile natives have driven the explorers off the island, or maybe an eruption of the volcano threatened. I do not know. And you also look in vain for rich natural resources of raw materials, fertile landscapes and exotic animals.

Nonetheless I like the mechanisms with the different sets of cards and the second turn of settling the island. Due to some surplus tiles not all tiles are used in every game and not all of the scoring cards are in play as well. So there is always a certain factor of imponderability which makes each game a little bit different which enhances the allure to play again. Not a classic, but a game that one, none

the less due to the simple set of rules, will always like to take off the shelves and put on the table. The game plays best with four players, or even with three. Two players should, as we have found out, not attempt to play. Have fun with exploring and settling the island! ☑

Christian Huber



INFORMATION

Designer: Marcel-André Casasola Merkle

Artist: Michael Menzel

Price: ca. 25 Euro

Publisher: Hans im Glück 2012

www.hans-im-glueck.de

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

EVALUATION

Placement and collecting game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:

Spiel der Spiele 2012 * Plays fast * Easy rules * Two fantastic mechanisms * Beautiful design and components

Compares to:

All games with turning up and then using tiles to build and score

Other editions:

Currently none



My rating:



40 Lines for Meeples

Dagmar de Cassan, Editor-in-Chief

In 2012 June is the month of awards in German speaking countries, in Austria, too, we have chosen this early date for our Spiel der Spiele.

To play a game always means to read and understand the rules.

Yes, we are all quite spoiled, most of the time there is someone at our gaming table who knows or explains the rules that we are spared reading them.

But if you want to evaluate new games and check if they are really good as we have been told or remember them, then there is no way to avoid rules.

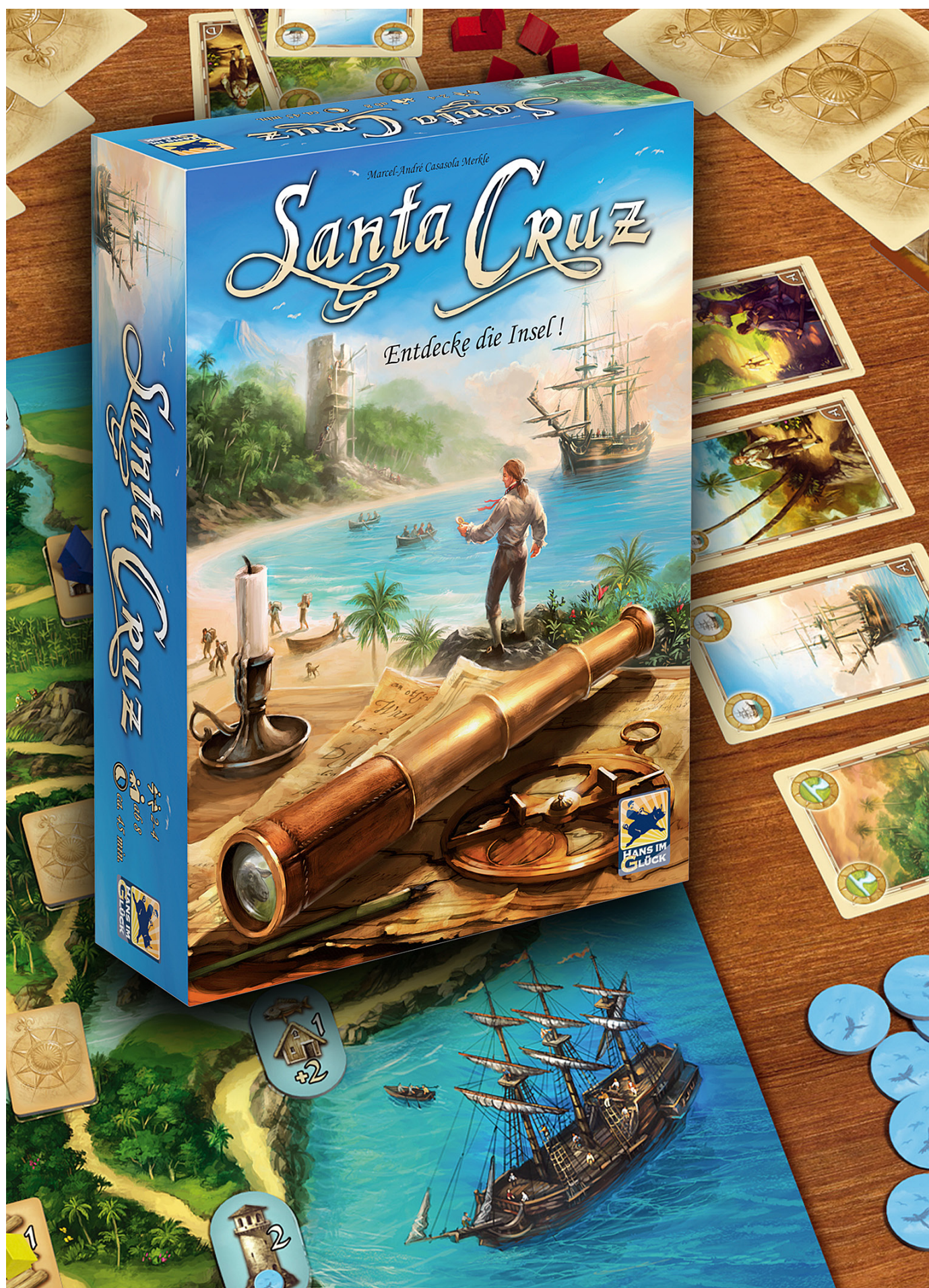
And this is the point, where it is clearly proven why it is so difficult to produce games for the occasional gamer, real introductory games with the purpose to entice new players:

Very often designers and editors are their own worst enemies when it is necessary to explain a game by rules. May we add some intricacies? Unfortunately, this is still the reality with lots of rules!

All the same, have fun reading this issue and if you would like to have more information, take a look at our database LUDORIUM, at <http://www.ludorium.at>. In our database you can currently find more than 28.000 texts and more than 20.000 images.

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EVEN SPIDERS ARE NICE

ZEBRA-SCHWEIN

WHEN COMBINED WITH A FROG

6+

„Recently a „Zebraschwein“ is a huge attraction for tourists in Longchuan (Provinz Guangdong). The pig has white strips on his brown body of 110 cm length and 65 cm height. The pig weighs more than 80 kilograms.

Furthermore, the front right leg is completely white, while the other three legs are black! Xie, the owner of the pig, mentioned that the pig was born looking completely normal and that the stripes suddenly appeared at the age of three months. Experts suppose that the pig suffers from a chromosome anomaly.”

Kurt Schellenbauer

All in all a mature and felicitous creation of the Brand family offspring and by Schmidt Spiele, where the game was very nicely implemented, we are curiously waiting for more of their games!

This notice from back in 2006 came to my mind when I had my first encounter with the new game from Schmidt Spiele, because a friendly grinning pig with black stripes was laughing off the cover of the box.

After opening the box you place six boards into the middle of the table; each of these boards is marked with a dice face showing 1 to 6 dots. On each of the boards you randomly place one of the 30 animal tiles from the box. If it is your turn to draw you roll two dice. The dice cup and a cover ensure that other players cannot spot the result the of the dice roll.

You look at the result of rolling the two dice to learn which animals you must combine in your drawing for the new animal that the others must guess. Should both dice show the same result you show the dice to the other players and roll both dice again for a new combination.

A pencil and a pad of paper are included in the game and you now try to draw or sketch the new animal. It is not necessary to draw a perfect image but it is important that one of the other players recognizes the combination of animals. Should a player believe that he knows which animals have been combined in the drawing he grabs the zebapig and presses it?

Zebrapig? What's this? Something absolutely fantastic, a 12 cm tall pig made from plastic, soft plastic, and when you press it it grunts, but in a way that you want to press it again and again, because the grunt is so realistic!

This is the signal for the drawing player to set aside the pencil and for the guessing player to make his guess. When the guessing player did guess wrongly, he is out of the game for this round and the drawing player can resume work on his drawing. When the guessing player was correct - whereby it is absolutely correct to name the two animals in any order, zebrapig is as correct as pigzebra - both the drawing player and the guesser are given one of the animals that were combined in the drawing.

INFORMATION

Designer: Emely & Lukas Brand

Artist: Anne Pätzke

Price: ca. 21 Euro

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele 2012

www.schmidtspiele.de

PLAYERS:

3-6

AGE:

6+

TIME:

20+

EVALUATION

Drawing game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it nl
In-game text: no

Comments:

Wonderful family game * Can be very well played by children alone * Attractive, cute illustrations

Compares to:

All drawing games with guessing at the images

Other editions:

Currently none



My rating:



GAMES BUYER INFORMATION SYSTEM - GABIS

STRUCTURE

Each game review also features an evaluation which can help you to find the game that best suits your tastes. The color accompanying each game title represents the USER Group. The headline also contains icons for age and number of players.

The BAR in the evaluation box displays color codes for up to 10 features of a game.

USER GROUP

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

Children:

Games for children an educational games. Adults can play in a 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

Please note for the user 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 user groups can overlap. The choice of suitable games always depends on your playing partners and your fun with games!

Games that are especially eligible for **Solo** play or for **2 players** or **Large groups** of players are marked with an icon.

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 color code marks the dominant features. Educational games train the highlighted preference.

Empty boxes: This feature is neglectable or not present
One colored box: This feature is present, but not essential
Two colored boxes: This feature is present and important in the game
Three colored boxes: This feature is dominant and essential

Chance:

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

Tactics:

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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Version: The edition of the game on which the review is based

Rules: This lists the languages in which rules are available or are included in the game, often even more translations can be found on the web.

In-game text: A YES marks a game with language-dependent components that cannot be played without translation or knowledge of the language. ☒



Pencil and paper are handed to the next player and the animals that were taken off the boards are replaced with two new ones from stock. The game ends when

there are not enough animals left to replace missing animals on the boards and the player who could collect most animals wins the game, in case of a tie there are several winners.

Emely Brand has already been involved in the creation of Mogelmotte at Drei Magier and has shown that the offspring is picking up the parents' act and are paying tribute to them. Emely and Lukas Brand are the children of Inka and Markus Brand, who have already given us some wonderful evenings with their good games.

The basic idea for this game is simply and has been well implemented, children can easily grasp and play it and therefore it is not always necessary that an adult is present. By the way, even children who cannot sit still for a longer period love to play this game.

The animal pictures on the tiles so far have

elicited a „how cute“ from all the children! Especially the young ladies had nice and intense discussions on the topic of what's more cute, the polar bear or the turtle, and “oh, look, the spider isn't nasty at all!

But, still, you should give a few hints to the children at the start of the game, especially when playing with adults. After rolling the dice and taking note of the results one should not look directly at the boards to check which animals are there; in the first few games I guessed eight out of ten animals only by watching children's eyes.

Also, each player should try to let his personality guide his drawings and not just copy the animals on the tiles. When you adhere to this it will result in funny, interesting and very impressive drawings, offering a lot of surprises what one's children draw when you give free reign to their imagination. ☑

Kurt Schellenbauer



WHEN IN THE ATLANTEAN EMPIRE,

MAGE KNIGHT

DO AS THE ATLANTEANS DO ... AND CONQUER 'EM!



Thirty-two years ago the Atlantean Empire was ripped apart due to a magic-accident, caused by unwary treasure hunters. Terrible magical powers were released, permeated all parts of this ravaged world, and to top it all hostile forces such as the evil orcs and the even more dangerous Draconum (that's pidgin Latin and means probably "extreme magical dragons") took the opportunity to overrun the countries of the destroyed empire. But now awe-inspiring warriors are coming through magic portals in order to restore some order. Since they command witchcraft as well as less mysterious martial arts, they were called "Mage Knights" by the ignorant peasants, but in fact they were sent here by the alien Council of the Void. This Council of allegedly divine beings pursues their own devious plans, and sometimes even play off Mage Knight against Mage Knight. Does this really bide well for the inhabitants of the formerly Atlantean realms?

That's about the background story to the current adventure game of Mage Knight™. Originally released in 2000 as the first successful Collectible Miniatures Game, WizKids ended their support after some time and many expansion sets. By constant demand of avid collectors and players (and, we would guess, investors) now comes a new release as (Collectible) Card Game, RPG and – main concern of this article – as a board game. Jihlava games author Vlaada Chvátil ("Through the Ages: A Story of Civilization", "Galaxy Truckers", "Dungeon Lords" et al.) wrote the rules, renowned artist J. "J-Is-For-Genius" Lonnee is responsible for the illustrations. This test report is based on the English-language edition, a German version has been published by Pegasus.

To invade the world of "Mage Knight™ Board Game", choose one of four characters (with Arythea the Blood Cultist, there is even included a female Mage Knight) and follow the instructions of the "Game Walkthrough". It is in fact advisable to peruse first this more practical introductory manual (which is not shorter, though, than the actual Rulebook – both consist of twenty densely and small printed pages), although it does no harm to study the detailed rules

at the same time or immediately afterwards. The "Game Walkthrough" is based on the initial scenario, "First Reconnaissance", in which, apart from combat of hero against hero (you still may fight one another, if all agree) and the conquest of a city, all game moves are present. Each further game may confidently be played using a different scenario out of eleven given adventures. Since this is essentially a strategy game that just happens to be located in a fantasy world, the mechanisms may be explained quite without using magic. Depending on the chosen scenario, the initial playing field is either three or four (cardboard, approximately star-shaped) Map Tiles showing seven different landscapes in hexagonal fields. While the Mage Knights explore the continent of Atlantis and fulfill certain subtasks, the board is constantly growing as well (reveal and place more Map Tiles). Upon successfully completing these tasks, the heroes gain rewards of various kinds. They earn Fame points, increase (or decrease) their reputation, get spells and mana(-crystals), recruit troops and gain new skills. There are slightly different winning conditions for each. There is even one quest where it is enough to win for the Mage Knight to be on the correct hex-field at the end of the last turn. In principle, though, at the end of the last turn you count points of several disciplines (fame track, greatest knowledge, greatest leader, greatest conqueror and the like; negative, on the other hand, will be the greatest beating, meaning having received the highest number of wounds), and who accumulates most points for his character is the winner.

The game is played in rounds named Day and Night. Within these larger units, the players take turns, the length of which depends on the number of cards played from their hand. At the start of the game, each Mage Knight has 16 Action Cards – 15 are identical for all characters, one card shows a unique skill or quality of the according Mage Knight. With increasing fame (marked on the Fame And Reputation Board) you gain new Deed Cards (action cards, spells and artifacts, but also, less pleasant, Wound cards) for your Character's deck, and thus gradually increase the duration of the rounds (day

and night). The round ends, if any character no longer can (or does not want to) play out Deed Cards. In order to make that not too predictable there are some special alterations (as when reaching a higher level) making it possible to exceed the general hand limit of five cards.

A Character's turn, if he does not pass or uses a special card-independent feature of certain hex-fields, consists of – in that order – movement (which can also be omitted), and one action. Action Cards

Martina, Martin & Marcus

Drawn-out but very attractively made strategy game in a fantasy setting, unfortunately governed by too many chance elements.

give the Characters movement and on the other hand actions of various kinds. Moving from space to space (hex-fields) costs movement points varying by each type of terrain shown on the Map Tiles (there are sometimes even differences between expenditure during day or night). Each card (except for Wound Cards, which only serve to clog up the players' hands) gives at least one movement point, even if no movement point number is printed onto it. The choice of actions is rather small: attack, block an attack, heal or interact with the populace on some fields (for which influence points are needed, basically provided by action cards, optionally increased by reputation, skills and other cards).

There are Mana-Dice as well (the number of which depends on the number of participating characters) in up to six colors (white, blue, green and red for elemental magic powers, black and yellow or gold with special features at night or day). At the start of their turn each Mage Knight may choose one die (skills or cards may increase this number), use the powers provided by its face-up color (mainly to activate or amplify played cards), and then roll the die and put it back again into the dice pool. It is not uncommon that by the re-rolling of the die a color appears, which renders the die to no more use in that round (black by day, yellow / gold at night).

Combat is regulated in a simple way, but often requires lengthy calculations and experimenting. Fighting monsters or the conquest of fortresses and Wizard Towers is managed, no surprise here, by playing cards. If you succeed in overcoming the opponent's defenses in the first phase of combat, the ranged combat (or assault) phase, all is over. However, this requires

exactly matching Action Cards (ranged or, respectively, siege attack). Moreover, their points value may not be increased by random cards as usual, only by previously recruited units, and only if they provide the matching attack skill. Fellow players are encouraged to watch closely, because it is easy, even without ill intent, to miscalculate when adding and subtracting the various bonuses (Fortified Bonus, Double Bonus gain, resistance to fire or ice, and quite a few more). When skipping the ranged combat phase, either because no matching cards or only too few points are available, the enemies

make their attack. Depending on the location, antagonists may range from marauding Orcs (green cardboard markers) to magic golems (purple) or even Dragonum (red or – oh dear – white markers). Now the Mage Knight has to defend against the attack (block action; points may be increased by means of random cards; of course there are loads of possible bonuses for either side, magical and otherwise), and take in any injuries. Then follows the close combat phase (attack cards of all types as well as the usual bonuses and penalties). If the Mage Knight wins, there are rewards (always more

fame, sometimes reputation gain or loss, occasionally something else, such as artifacts or spells), if he loses, he must retire to his starting space before the combat. Special forms of combat are the exploration of monster dens or dungeons, other adventurous places – draw more, in most cases stronger enemies (markers) according to the location markers placed there – or cities, the biggest challenge, because they are the most heavily fortified places.

Further actions are healing and interacting with the population or with garrisons



of fortresses and Wizard Towers to recruit troops, buy healing and spells, or raiding the odd village or monastery (which brings considerable loss of reputation, but you can get hold of great treasures).

Although pointed out in the rules several times that the player whose turn comes next may well plan his actions during the turn of the current player, the game often comes to a halt. Fellow players have to be watched closely and, moreover, in the first and usually in the second round also, the Mage Knights keep together quite close on the playing field, so that,

unless you want to have your Mage Knights beat up one another on every turn, your actions during your turn are influenced very much by the actions of the others.

The rule books are rich in detail, but rather poorly structured and, unfortunately, not entirely free from complicated or ambiguous formulations. The "Game Walkthrough" has been written in accordance with the development of events and encounters in the basic scenario (the Map Tiles are numbered, in "First Reconnaissance" they are not to be shuffled), but it is hard to quickly find the right answer to simple questions ("Whoever is to attack now – the Orcs or I?"). Unfortunately, there is not any kind of index in the rulebook(s). Games publishers by now apparently expect from players to have on-line rules always available on their computers while playing, and therefore can easily browse through them any time. Well, there are still people around who do not like playing that way.

The biggest drawback for us was, though, the surprisingly large random factor, given "Mage Knight™ Board Game" is promoted as a strategy game. Not only the new Map Tiles to be explored in almost all scenarios are to be drawn from the tile deck and placed relatively arbitrarily (just text and some symbols must be aligned) – that's fine and makes it possible to play an adventure several times, each under slightly different conditions. Even newly-to-be-acquired action cards, spells, and Mage Knights' skills are drawn at random. This is particularly disturbing when planning for one's own hand of cards. Instead of choosing a card hand for the round (day or night) – still a lot may go out of plan there –, one must fear and hope that in the next turn the matching card pops up to enable an attack on the stupid monsters on the neighboring space, while the more fortunate fellow player is recruiting Super Ninja Warrior Monks for the third time. Considered by itself, the rule-consistent option to change your mind and take back any cards or actions "as long as no new information was revealed" (for example, placing a new Map Tile) seems rather friendly, but leads in any case in the first few games to almost endless playing time. Three hours seems to be the absolute minimum, even for the simplest scenario.

The game components (including over 450 cards, cardboard marker chips and Map Tiles, 54 beautiful and colorful crystals that you'd better never put next to the jar of jelly-babies, and four pretty and

pre-painted hero miniature figures, and as many rather big city models) are quite nice, not over-done but detailed enough. The printing, though, even on the markers and inside the rule booklets is way too small. Even important icons are most of the time hard to distinguish from each other.

Whoever is not into long nights with short phases of action and longer periods of brooding about each and every purchase of equipment or travelling slowly to nondescript locations of no individuality at all, half-heartedly flavored with some fantasy elements, may safely skip this game. On the other hand, whoever is intrigued by constantly thinking and re-thinking meticulously different tactics, is not deterred by the sudden and unpredictable emergence of action cards in his own hand, and is more than willing to try this out in a world inhabited by magic monsters and monk warriors (and at least without magma eruptions or mutants), will love "Mage Knight™ Board Game" for sure. ☑

Martina & Martin Lhotzky,
Marcus Steinwender



INFORMATION

Designer: Vlaada Chvátil

Artist: J. Lonnee, Milan Vavroň

Price: ca. 60 Euro

Publisher: WizKids 2011

www.pegasus.de

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
14+

TIME:
180+

EVALUATION

Strategic fantasy game

For experts

Version: en

Rules: de en

In-game text: yes

Comments:

High element of chance * Copious rules * Beautiful components * Long duration

Compares to:

Runebound, Warrior Knights

Other editions:

Mage Knight, Pegasus



My rating:

CITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE CENTURIES

QUEBEC

A MAJORITY GAME SUPPORTED BY WORKERS

When I opened the box of Quebec for the first time I was shocked by the board: one of the worst I ever saw in the last few years! Luckily, I had already the opportunity of reading a few reports from Essen and I knew that the game was well accepted by players, so I went on with the set-up for our first test.

The board depicts the old walls of the town of Quebec with some roads, houses and fields: inside this "perimeter" a mix of groups of 3 or 4 colored circles (yellow, blue, red and violet) fill the map. Each "group" includes 2 or 3 "empty" circles (for the buildings that the player will erect during the game) and a colored one with some symbols (that we will examine later). Around the board are printed a scoring track and 5 important "Zones of Power" (Religion, Politics, Economy, Culture and Citadel).

On this map you have to place 44 heavy cardboard colored disks (yellow, blue, red and violet) that show on one side a famous building of the town, and on the reverse side a number (I, II, III, IV) and three empty squares. The number indicates the "century" in which the building was erected (I for 1600, II for 1700, III for 1800 and IV for 1900) and the "squares" are used to place the workers that will build it.

The game also contains 125 "workers" (colored wooden cubes, 25 for each player's color); 11 Architects (2 pawns per players and a yellow one for the Economic Leader); 120 cardboard colored tokens (24 per players); 11 blue wooden chips (used to mark the available buildings); 5 (optional) Leaders cards and 16 (optional) Event cards. Finally we have 5 heavy cardboard mini-boards in the players' colors that will be used to display the available workers during the game. They are called "hand" tiles (because a hand is depicted on each tile).

The set-up requires a few minutes and some attention: you have to fill each group of colored circles on the map with the appropriate disks (buildings) of the same color but you must avoid placing two buildings of the same color and century next to each other. Place the 11 blue chips on the "Century I" disks to better show which building will be available on the first round of the game. Finally place the five Leaders cards (and four Event cards if this option is selected) near the board.

Then each player takes his workers, tokens and pawns: one pawn is placed on the scor-

ing track that is printed on the map, while the other will be the player's "Architect" during the game. Store the Architect and 3 workers on your "Hand" tile. The remaining components will be the players' reserve.

The game may be played in three levels: the first is the "Family Game" and will not use Leaders and Event cards; the second is the "Full Game" and will add the Leaders; the third add the Event Cards. We started

Pietro Cremona

A game well worth trying, offering an excellent choice of options and tactics, but no clear-cut strategy!

playing immediately the Full game and we passed to the third level after 3 test. We never played the "Family" game, but the considerations that will follow will not change (just do not consider the comments on Leaders and Events).

Quebec is easy to learn (there are very few rules and they are clearly explained) and once you have understood what each symbol means you do not need to go back to the rules. But the available options are so many that you surely need a couple of games before being able to play with some sort of strategy in mind.

In short: you send your Architect to a building (taking the blue chip on it) and you hope that the other players will help you to finish it quickly (sending their workers there) in order to let you start another building. Once a building is finished (or when you decide to stop the construction) your Architect is moved to another building, you place one of your tokens there while all the workers are sent to the Zone of Power of the same color and so on until all the buildings of that century are completed.

Each player, on his turn, has to select one of the following actions:

- 1 – Start a new building
- 2 – Contribute to a building
- 3 – Place a worker on a Zone of Power
- 4 – Take a Leader Card

To START A NEW BUILDING you simply have to send your Architect to that location (and immediately take 3 workers from your reserve to be placed on your Hand tile). Each building belongs to a "District" of the town and has three "working" areas that must be filled to complete the construction. Each district offers some features to the players that will invest their workers on the con-

struction of a building started by another player.

To CONTRIBUTE TO A BUILDING you have to send 1-2-3 workers on one of the three working areas of that building. If there is another player's Architect you will benefit of the "bonus action" offered by that District: usually this means that you may get free workers from your reserve placing them in another building or in one or more Zones of Power or you may get victory points (VP), etc. If you send workers to a building with your own Architect you will not get any bonus (but you will accelerate the construction of that building).

To PLACE A WORKER ON A ZONE OF POWER you simply take ONE cube from your Hand tile and you place it in one of the five available zones

Finally you may take one of the five LEADER



CARDS (if still available) in order to use their "special powers": with the RELIGIOUS leader you may get the District bonus even if you place workers with your Architect; with the POLITICAL leader you may chose to move your workers from a building of a color to a Zone of Power of a different color; with the ECONOMIC Leader you get a second Architect; with the CULTURAL leader you get extra VP when a building is finished; with the CITADELLE leader you immediately move 3 workers from your reserve to the citadel. Note that when a century ends all the leaders are given back and they will become again available at the beginning of the following turn.

You may stop the construction of a building when you like: you just have to take the action (1) and move your Architect to another place. If the building's three work-

ing areas are filled you flip the building tile on the front side and you place a "3 stars" token of your color on it. Otherwise you must use a "2 stars" or "1 star" token, but if nobody invested workers on that building no tokens are placed. It is very important to note now that you should try to have a good number of your buildings in adjacent position inside Quebec, possibly with a lot of "stars" tokens on, as they will score a lot of VP at the game's end.

When a player wishes to start a new building but all the blue chips are already taken the first Century arrives to an end and the game pause for a while. Players mark the Victory Points (VP) given by the five Zones of Power, starting from the Citadel: each cube on this Zone gives 1 VP to its owner (move the corresponding pawn on the scoring track). Then you must check who

has the majority of cubes and move half of his cubes (with a maximum of 5) to the following Zone (this is called a "cascade move"). The remaining cubes are sent back to each player's reserve. Do the same for the following Zone (1VP per cube and check for the majority, with half of those cubes sent to the following zone) and so on until the last Zone. Then you place the 11 blue chips on the buildings for the second Century. (Please note that the "order" of the Zones changes on each century, but the First one is always the Citadel).

All that done the Architect that caused the century's end is placed again on the map on a new building and the game resumes as before: it is very important to try to estimate the right timing of the century's end, as being the first to place your Architect will give you the opportunity to select the right



building before your opponents. I wish to stress again that having many adjacent buildings at the game's end will grant a lot of VP and most of the game's tactics are based on this consideration: it may happen that you will be obliged to select a building of scarce interest just to avoid that he is taken by an opponent; sometimes you may decide to stop early the construction of one of your buildings only to be certain to start the century's end phase and to move your Architect in an important location ... without forgetting that if you are the first to place the Architect you will be ... the last to select a new Leader.

At the end of the IVth Century's end phase the game is finished and a FINAL SCORE is done: first the players receive 1 VP for each worker still on a building under construction; then they get 1 VP for each "star" of their color on buildings that are not part of the player's main group; finally for each main group the players add the VP numbers printed on all the tokens (1 VP for a "1 star" token, 3 VP for a "2" stars token and 6 VP for a "3" stars token). As I wrote before a good "group" of adjacent buildings may grant many VP!!!

The player with most points is obviously the winner.

As we have seen the rules are not so many or so difficult, and you may learn them very quickly; but playing is another thing as you will constantly have to think well before taking your actions.

The first decision is "which" building to select to start: if the "bonus" action is very interesting and the cost (in workers) is not too high (1 or 2 cubes per area) your opponents will send their workers and you will be able to quickly finish the building and send your Architect to another one ... but your opponents get a lot of bonus actions. If the selected building is too ... expensive (3 workers) you will have to wait a lot before completing it or you will be obliged to use your own workers without getting any bonus (unless you have the Religious leader). But the most important decision is always "where" to send your own workers: you always have a limited number of them available (you start with 6 and you get 3 extra every time that you move your Architect) and some buildings require 2-3 workers per area. So a careful look at the different possibilities is necessary: try to select places where you get extra workers as bonus, if possible, but remember that your opponents will do the same and sometimes waiting an extra turn will mean ... losing the opportunity.

Leaders also are important: we discussed a lot in our group to understand which one was the most valuable of them, but we were unable to find a clear answer and this

means that the designers were very clever!!! After the first two test games there was really a first turn "race" to get the Religious Leader (who has the advantage to let you use the District bonus even in your own Architect's building). It seemed a very powerful choice especially when you need to take a particular building to increase your main group and it has also an interesting (even if costly) bonus.

But after a few extra tests we discovered that each Leader is powerful, if properly used, so each player often decided his general strategy for that century before selecting a Leader.

The Political leader allows you to move your workers from a finished building to any Zone of Power (and not just to the Zone of the same color): this is a very strong possibility when you are fighting to get the majority in one or more Zones

The Economic leader gives you a second Architect and you may use it to start a second building (getting also 3 extra workers on your hand tile): you may take this leader when you have to use your Architect in a costly building (knowing that it will take a lot of time to finish) or when you wish to enlarge your main group quickly.

The Cultural leader is particularly interesting if you decide to select low cost (1 worker per area) buildings: in effect he gives you extra VP (1 to 4) every time that you place your "star" tokens

Finally the Citadel leader is the one that generated most discussions: his bonus allows you to "simply" place 3 workers from your reserve to the Citadel and that's all. In the first test we all ignored this card but soon we realized that the Citadel is always the first Zone to be counted at the century's end and thus the player who win the majority here may "cascade" half of his cubes on the following one, and very often this gave him the possibility to have a second cascade on the third Zone. Really a lot of VP!!! So actually this leader is the first or second to be selected (also because it is not so easy to send workers in the Citadel: the District's bonus gives very few opportunities and always just one cube per bonus).

It is very difficult for me to give you a sort of "strategy" for a game of Quebec as things change very quickly and you must adapt your tactics accordingly, seeking any opportunity as soon as it arises. The game is really very interactive!

So it easier to let you know a couple of dirty tricks that we discovered during our test:

(a) – If you have an architect in a building that requires 3 workers and if your opponents filled the three areas ... you have now 9 hostages! If possible do not move your Architect until the century's end, so the 9 workers will not be available for a while.

(b) – If one player is well advanced in the scoring track and if he places his architect in an important building (for his main group) do not send any worker there so he will be obliged to send his own (without getting any bonus) or change building without scoring any star.

Of course Quebec is not a game for families or casual players, and if you are a "pure strategist" you will be probably disappointed as you will not be able to program a long term strategy. But this game is really very interactive and you will be hooked after the first or second try. You immediately have to start to make decisions on "which are the best available bonuses" and you have to immediately jump on each opportunity, always with an eye on the five Zones of Power to try to select the buildings of the right color if you wish to get a majority (and therefore start the "cascade" process).

Finally remember that having a "main group" of 5-6 buildings may give you up to 30-36 VP, really a lot of points: so at the game start try select buildings not too far from each other because they will probably allow you to connect them later in the game and, of course, always do your best to block your opponents to do the same! ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: Baudoin, Poissant-Marquis

Artist: Mariusz Gandzel

Price: ca. 38 Euro

Publisher: Scorpion Masque / Ystari 11

www.asmodee.de

PLAYERS:

2-5

AGE:

13+

TIME:

90+

EVALUATION

Worker placement game

With friends

Version: de

Rules: de en fr

In-game text:

Comments:

Surprising new and innovative mechanisms * Interesting interactions due to assistance given and bonuses received for assistance

Compares to:

El Grande and other worker placement games on majorities and area control, but first game of its kind in combination of those mechanisms

Other editions:

Currently none



My rating:



A RENAISSANCE PRINCIPALITY

PRINCIPATO

DEVELOP IT AND EARN PRESTIGE

This time our game journey takes into Italy at the time of Renaissance. Aim of the game is to develop and expand your principality to enhance your prestige. Just as any principality in Italy this one too, comprises a church, a palazzo, a city center, a city wall and city environs.

In each of those areas you attend to different tasks. The City Walls harbor your military forces represented by militia, catapults and condottiere. In the city environs agriculture is flourishing. Works of Art like monuments, books and paintings can be found at the Palace. Favors can be gleaned in church and in the city center you do not only find palazzi, but also banking houses. In accordance with these locations you place tokens of the same color and also wooden cubes of the color corresponding to the location.

There is no limit for the number of tokens allowed in an area; should an area be full you place them elsewhere around your principality. But there is a limit for the cubes that can be placed on tiles: Two on Farm and Bank, Three on Church, one on Militia and Condottiere.

Each player is given a principality. Depending on the number of players a different number of action cards is in play: In case of two players you remove the cards marked with a Three or Four in their corners, and in a game of three players you remove the cards marked with a Four; only in a game of four players all cards are used. The action cards in play and the military cards are separated by back side and shuffled. Starting cards are cards marked with S1 and S2; each player is dealt one of these cards of both S1 and S2 cards, which are placed face-up next to the principality.

The game covers a period of three years. For each of those years a separate stack of cards is used. The stacks for the second and third year are supplemented by shuffling in an additional Military Scoring Card. So, all in all, three military scorings happen in a game. As soon as such a military card is turned up it is implemented. From the first stack of cards a number of cards depending on the number of players is laid out, five cards in case of two

players, six cards in case of three players and seven cards are laid out when four players are in the game. The cards are displayed in the middle of the table, and the draw pile is set next to them at the end of the line.

The goal cards are stacked in two piles according to their back side and each player receives one card from each pile. These cards are kept secret and determine the strategy one should during the game in order to win. Then, each player is given one field, one farm, one palazzo and one bank token to set up your principality.

You play in turns and in clockwise direction, three years all in all. At the end of a year a military scoring happens and then the next year is started. The end of the third year is also the end of the game. Each player in his turn has two actions at this disposal. Those actions are possible in any combination and it is also possible to pass on one or both of those actions. But this will happen very rarely if at all, because those actions are scarce in the game and you usually want to do more in your move than two.

You can choose between three kinds of actions: You can activate an action card, exchange an action card or take a favor cube. In your turn you always have two action cards at your disposal which give you certain actions to implement. At the start of the game those two cards are the two starting cards you have been dealt.

An action card is activated simply by implementing the corresponding action of the card. You can execute this action only once. After you execute an action you must swap cards, on which an exchange symbol is depicted, swap with a card from the display, regardless of if you want to swap it or not. This rule ensures that no card can be blocked by a player and gives other players the opportunity to execute this action, too.

But at the same time there are cards offering actions that can be blocked by players, obviously cards without an exchange symbol. Those cards need not be exchanged, but can be exchanged if you decide to use the second possible action, "exchange of cards". This way of swap-

ping cards loses you an action contrary to the forced exchange when using an exchange card. This in an indirect way gives you three possible actions, if not even four of them, when you activate two exchange cards. This gets you necessary action cards much faster and you can implement them much quicker, which is an advantage, because, as already mentioned, actions are a scarce commodity in the game.

The third possible action, which you could use, is taking a favor cube from stock and placing it into the church of your principality.

Isabella Schranz

The game has good rules and that is, next to some other positive facts, half of the success for any game and also of this one; a nice game that is also of interest for inexperienced players.

favor cubes can be used as a joker in lieu of money cubes or food cubes, and so favor cubes enable you to pay your military forces and to feed them, too.

The turn of a player ends after implementation of both actions. A final act before the turn of the next player starts is to remove the foremost card in the display

INFORMATION

Designer: Touko Tahkokallio

Artist: Dennis Lohausen

Price: ca. 16 Euro

Publisher: Eggertspiele 2011

www.eggertspiele.de

PLAYERS:

2-4

AGE:

10+

TIME:

90+

EVALUATION

Ressourcenmanagement

Mit Freunden

Version: de

Regeln: de en fi fr nl pl

Text im Spiel: no

Comments:

Gute, wenn auch etwas kompliziert strukturierte Regeln * Trotzdem auch für unerfahrenere Spieler geeignet * Alles in allem Standard-Ressourcen-Managementmechanismen

Compares to:

Il Principe, Verona, Firenze, Florenza und andere Aufbauspiele mit Thema Stadtstaaten/ Fürstentümer im Italien der Renaissance

Other editions:

Z-Man, USA; Gigamic, Frankreich; Lautapelit, Finnland, G3, Polen; White Goblin, Niederlande



My rating:





from the game, move the remaining cards forward by one position and place a new card from the draw pile into the free slot in last place in the display. This ensures changes variety in the game.

When the draw pile of a year has been used up the year ends and a military scoring happens. For this military scoring you first have to feed your militia; this is done by placing green food cubes on the militia tokens. Then you must pay your condottiere by placing yellow money cubes on the corresponding tiles. After feeding your militia and paying your condottiere you determine your current military strength. Each catapult that you own is worth one point. Each condottiere that you could pay - he can be identified by

the yellow cube on the corresponding token - earns you an additional point. The same mechanism is used for militia that you were able to feed. Should there be militia or condottiere tokens in your principality that are not fed or paid, that is, are without a food or money cube, you are penalized with one loss of one point for each such token. Therefore you should keep a careful eye on your military forces and make sure that you can feed and pay them if you want to win the military scoring. When all players have determined the total strength of their military forces military victory point bills are given out in relation to your strength, they serve as victory points. The amount of victory points for each strength value is determined by the number of players in the game. The rules

feature a table for this purpose, where you can check the number of military victory point bills due to each player.

In case of a tie both players involved in the tie add their victory points and then divide them by two and if necessary, round up the result.

After military victory point bills have been distributed among players, the green and yellow cubes are removed from the respective tokens and put back into general stock. Then all players are allowed to discard any number of Condottiere and militia back and place them back into general stock. You are free to keep them all or discard them all; the decision is entirely yours, but keep in mind that the next mili-



tia scoring could happen sooner than you think and that then maybe you might not be able to feed or pay your military forces. Why? Because there is an additional military scoring at a random time during the second and third year, the necessary cards to make this happen have been shuffled into the stack of cards for the years.

At the end of the third year you calculate your victory points. For the total of your victory points you add up the military victory point bills you own that you have won in the military scorings. Then you add to this the number of victory points marked on each culture token that you were able to acquire, those include books, monuments and paintings which you collected. And finally, you check if you were

able to comply with one or both of your secret goal cards. If that should be the case you receive the number of victory points stated on the goal card. And the winner of the game is - well, no surprise there - the player with the highest total of victory points.

As you can see, Principato is an interesting game, despite the fact that the rules have been structured rather complicatedly. But this is necessary to understand the mechanics of the game and so the structure of the rules is okay, even good, especially as there are many examples to illustrate the rules and even the action cards are explained in detail. There are no questions left unanswered by the rules, which is a big bonus for the game.

In my opinion the game is especially well suited to players with little gaming experience, because the goal cards that you receive at the start of the game, kind of tell you the strategy you should follow in the course of the game. But, I have to say, those goal cards are in no way balanced or of equal value. Some of them are very easily completed and others very difficult to implement, which could be an obstacle for inexperienced players, because they know in theory how to win but have not much opportunity to really win the game.

☑

Isabella Schranz

AKTIENRAUSCH

25 MILLION IN SWITZERLAND

25 Millions in Switzerland is the aim of the game; we want to earn as much money as possible by trading shares and earning dividends. You alternate a Stock Round with a Dividends round plus change of starting player.

In each Stock round you have three actions: Buy one share per action, maximum two, and pay the money to the company; or

sell, once, any number of shares of a kind, or you pass. In the same round you cannot first sell and then buy or first buy and then sell shares of the same company, and you can only buy up 4 of the 5 shares of a company.

In the Dividends round you as president of companies pick up the money on those companies and can now place cards on the

dividend areas, always value+1 of the previous card, regardless of the company name, in order to end up with stacks topped by a card of one of your own companies. For each company on top of a stack the share price rises by one, for all others it decreases by one million. Share holders of companies with rising price are paid dividends: Stacks with the same company on top are joined, more expensive stack on top, the president gets the two top cards and then deals all cards in turn to all share holders. If you received the lowest dividend you are new starting player. Cash in access of 8 millions must be paid into the Swiss account and you pay 50% tax when paying in or drawing money from the Swiss account.

The double use of the cards allows a lot of tactics, as you know colors and numbers of cards placed at a company for the dividends round; all in all the simple mechanisms provide a challenging and attractive game. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
10+

TIME:
50+

Designer: Florian Isensee

Artist: Klaus Beilstein, Iris Dahlke

Price: ca. 5 Euro

Publisher: Isensee Verlag 2011

www.isensee-verlag.de

EVALUATION

Stock market game
With friends

Version: de

Rules: de

In-game text: no

Comments:

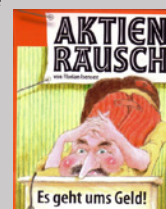
Inventive double use of cards * Simple mechanisms with lot of tactics * All in all an attractive and challenging game

Compares to:

All games with stock market mechanisms; San Juan, Bohnanza and other for multiple use of cards

Other editions:

Currently none



BUNTES BLUMEN-RENNEN

BUTTERFLIES AND GRASHOPPERS



Beneath the beautiful flowers in many pretty colors many animal friends from the garden are hiding and players are tasked with searching for them.

The 24 flower cards are well shuffled and laid out animal side down and evenly distributed. With this flower meadow one can play four different games:

Das große Rennen is aimed at

2-8 players. The task cards are shuffled and placed face-down next to the flowers. The top card is turned up and all spring to find the correct flower, you can only turn up one flower at a time. If you find the correct flower you take it and turn over the next card. If you are first to collect three flowers you win.

Der Bienenschwarm is played

with 2-4 teams; one team gets three task cards and turns over the top one; one team members runs and searches for the correct flower by turning up one by one. Then the next player looks for the next card.

Memo is meant for 2-4 players. You turn up two flowers: When they show identical animals you can set them aside and turn up another two flowers, when the animals are different you turn the flowers over again. When all flowers have been collected you win with most pairs.

For **Blumentanz** you lay out number of player minus one flowers of each color. All players run circles around the flowers and hum a melody; the oldest player names a color and each player must quickly find such a flower and touch it. If you do not find one you are out of the game and one flower of each color is removed. Last one in play wins! This is an enchanting version of well-known standard mechanisms, especially intended for playing outdoors; simple, colorful, and simply beautiful. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-8

AGE:
4+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Christoph Reiser

Artist: not stated

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Die Spiegelburg 2012

www.spiegelburg.de

EVALUATION

Movement game
For children

Version: multi

Rules: de en es fr it nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

Beautiful components * Especially attractive package in the shape of a bag * Dry playing area required

Compares to:

All versions of Memo and "Musical Chairs"

Other editions:

Currently none



BURST

THE OFF-KEY DANCE
AROUND THE VOLCANO



Party and crazy tasks are the order of the day in order to be first to arrive at the Burst volcano. At the volcano you must master a Do-not-laugh task which you must survive to be the winner of the game! The volcano is assembled and filled with word cards. One Hot Spot card is chosen; this card is valid for all of the game and determines what happens

on the Hot Spots on the board. You roll the die, implement the task of this color on the top card and move your pawn accordingly. When you reach an occupied spot you quickly shout "Burst" or must step back one spot.

The black tasks are easy: The volcano issues a verdict; you listen and move your pawn according to the verdict. For a red task you

must keep a straight face for the timer period, while the others try to make you laugh with funny words. For a green task you draw a card from the volcano and explain it by pantomime, drawing or talking. For purple you complete a sentence and the other players judge the statement with "true" or "nonsense" and you move forward one spot for each wrong guess; all players who guess correctly, move one spot, too. In case of yellow you draw words from the volcano, fill the gaps in the sentence on the card and then implement the task taking into account what you filled in. Blue delivers a "What the ..." card, they are secret and must be implemented without explanation, for instance close your eyes until your next turn and stay inert.

In short, a standard party game featuring standard mechanisms, the fun cannot be transported in writing, but it is there and the tasks themselves are absolutely funny and not standard at all! ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-8

AGE:
12+

TIME:
60+

Designer: Jean + Matthew Rivaldi

Artist: Matthew Rivaldi

Price: ca. 18 Euro

Publisher: Amigo Spiele 2012

www.amigo-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Party game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: yes

Comments:

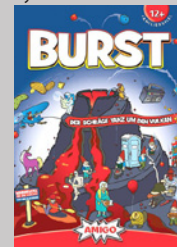
Party game with standard mechanisms * Absolutely funny tasks * Attractive components * Best for fans of such games

Compares to:

Quelf and other party games

Other editions:

Currently none



CAPTAIN KIDD

PIRATES SEARCHING FOR GEMS

3↑

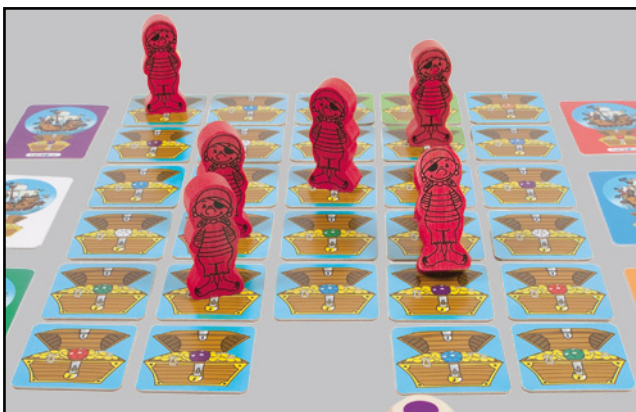
And yet once again pirates are searching for treasures, this time they are specializing on gems and those gems need to correspond to their varying color preferences.

The game features 30 treasure chest tiles; these tiles all show an identical chest holding gold pieces and one colored gem on top, this gem shows one of six

different colors, it is either white, orange, red, purple, blue or green. All those tiles are spread out face-up on the table, or arranged in a grid. A game master or the oldest player who should know colors very well already, places one pirate each on one gem of each color in a way that the pirate completely hides the gem in the chest.

In your turn you roll the color die and must then find the pirate that is standing on the gem of the color you rolled. If you did pick up the correct pirate you get the treasure chest tile and put the pirate on another gem of the same color. If you made a mistake, you put the pirate back in place and the turn passes to the next player. If there is no gem of the same color left on the table the pirate is set aside on the corresponding color card. When only three pirates remain in the game you win with most tiles.

At first glance Captain Kidd seems to be a simple memo game like so many others, but if you take a closer look you find that the game offers a very different challenge: You are not asked to remember different images, but you must remember the changing positions and the always new combinations of color and pirate position. This provides intensive training for attention span and memory as well as for memorizing and recognizing of colors. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
3+

TIME:
10+

Designer: Angelika + Jürgen Lange

Artist: Heike Georgie

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Beleduc 2012

www.beleduc.de

EVALUATION

Memo game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: cn de en es fr it nl
In-game text: no

Comments:

Basically standard memo mechanism * Nice variation due to memorizing colors and positions * Changing positions train concentration and attention span

Compares to:

Basically all memo games

Other editions:

Currently none



DRECKSAU

GO AND SCRUB SOMEONE ELSE'S PIG!

7↑

Mud is fashionable this year, after Matschig! now comes Drecksau, but instead of fending off mud we want to end up with really, really dirty pigs and only clean up pigs of other players.

Depending on the number of players you have 3-5 clean pigs on the table. The remaining cards - mud cards, rain cards, barn cards, lightning cards, lightning

rod cards, farmer-scrubs-the-sow cards and miffed-farmer cards are well shuffled and then each player is dealt three cards on hand, the rest of the cards is draw pile. You play a card from your hand and - in the case of barn, lightning rod and miffed farmer - places it next to one's pigs, clean or dirty, or you discard the card open-faced in case of



mud, rain, lightning and farmer-scrubs-the-sow cards. The action on these cards is executed. If you do not want to implement the action of a card you can discard it unused. If you cannot use any of your cards, for instance in case of three lightning rods without a barn, you discard all three of them and draw new ones. A barn protects the pig next to it from rain, but not from farmer-scrubs-the-sow! Rain cleans all dirty pigs, lightning burns down all barns unless protected by a lightning rod; this protects the barn, it is secure for the rest of the game. Miffed-farmer protects the pig against farmer-scrubs-the-sow, which would otherwise turn a dirty pig into a clean one.

The first player to have only dirty pigs on display wins immediately.

Drecksau is a pattern card for a good family card game; it has simple, quickly grasped rules, plays very quick and is a lot of fun to play! Let's go and find some clean pigs for another game of Drecksau! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
7+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Bebenroth, Fritsche

Artist: F. Bebenroth, K. Witt

Price: ca. 7 Euro

Publisher: Kosmos 2012

www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

Card game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:

Fantastic family game
* Funny topic and witty illustrations * Good to carry along * Quickly learned, plays fast

Compares to:

Card placement games using action cards

Other editions:

Currently none



ELFER RAUS! MASTER

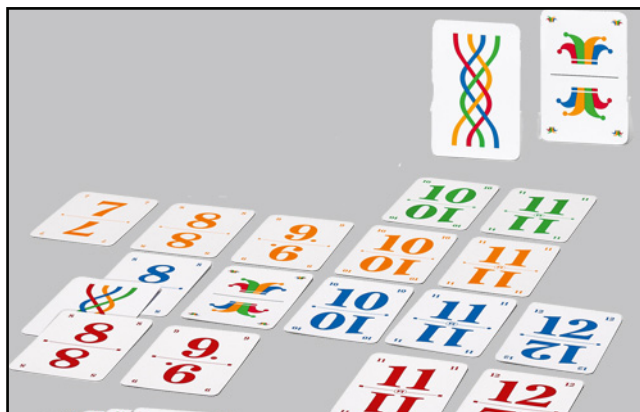
NOW YOU CAN PLACE CARDS IN COLUMNS, TOO!

8↑

Each player tries to be first to place his cards into rows of the same color. In the basic game you first play an 11, preferably the red one, and then place cards next to it in ascending or descending order, at first a 10 or a 12. A new 11 card starts a new row. You can place any number of correct cards in a turn; often it is of advantage not to place all

cards that you could place.

In this Master version all four cards 11 are placed underneath each other; the remaining number and joker cards are shuffled, each player is dealt between 12 and 20 cards, depending on the number of players, plus two to four connection cards. You can place one to four cards into one or several rows or draw the top



card from the stack. In a row you place cards with the color of 11; at the end cards must be displayed in ascending order from 1 to 21, with the exception of jokers or connection cards. For the last card that you place at one side, that is, between 1-11 or 11-21, you receive a bonus card. A joker replaces any card and can be replaced by the correct card. A connection card points to the neighboring row, where you must place the card with correct number and color; connection cards do not count for the one to four cards that you can place. When you place your last card, you end the game; each bonus card is worth 11 points, each card in hand its value as negative points and each joker in hand 11 negative points; you win with the highest score.

A classic card game that has been sophisticatedly and nicely varied; the connection cards make the game more tactical as you must take care not to open up too many possibilities to others. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
8+

TIME:
30+

Designer: W. Kramer, L. Hausser

Artist: Schwarzschild

Price: ca. 10 Euro

Publisher: Ravensburger 2012

www.ravensburger.de

EVALUATION

Card shedding game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:

Sophisticated variant of the classic card game by Hausser * Joining cards make the game more tactical and at the same time simpler

Compares to:

Elfer raus! and other card shedding games

Other editions:

Currently none



EQUIOLOGIC

THE MAGIC SQUARE GAME



Equilogic is a new member in the rapidly growing family of logic puzzles and it follows the standard scheme for that kind of games. A number of puzzles, in this case 48, must be solved in ascending order, corresponding to the rising level of difficulty. The solutions for the puzzles are, in the case of Equilogic, added to the box in a separate booklet.

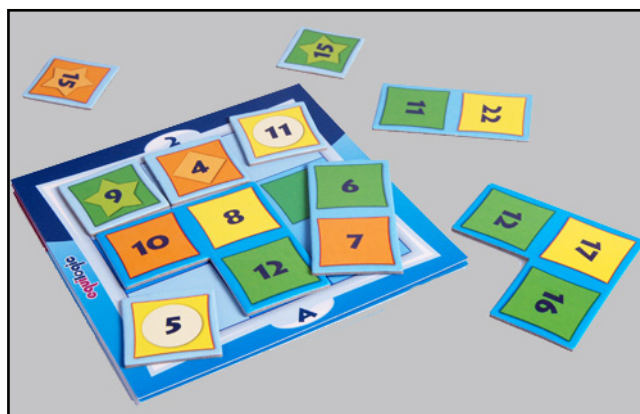
The basis for all those puzzles is a so-called Magic Square. Magic squares are displays of numbers in a grid of 3x3 squares. Those numbers add up to the same total in each row and each column and also along each of the diagonals, and each number is present only once in the grid. Furthermore, the total of each row, column and diagonal

equals the result of multiplying the middle number by three. And on top of this numbers are all set into a colored background, and each of the colors can only be present once in each row and column. The value of the numbers itself is not important. Some the numbers are also marked with a symbol and the number tiles are made up of one, two or three squares carrying one, two or three numbers.

Each puzzle provides one or several clues to the solution: Some numbers are already in place, as are some of the symbol and color markings as well as markings for the size/shape of the number tiles that need to be placed.

When more than one are playing, each player is given a puzzle marked with the same letter for the same level of difficulty; if you are first to solve your puzzle you win the round.

Equilogic offers elegant fun in thinking and solving puzzles, alone or with other players; it is an attractive addition to the range of logic puzzles. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-3

AGE:
9+

TIME:
var

Designer: H. Efraim, A. Laden
Artist: Ariel Laden, Ayelet Eytan
Price: ca. 13 Euro
Publisher: Productief bv 2011
www.productief.nl

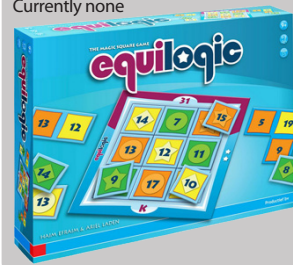
EVALUATION

Logic puzzle
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr nl
In-game text: no

Comments:
Standard basic mechanisms * Trains logical thinking and mental arithmetic skills * Playable for two or three, too

Compares to:
All kinds of logical puzzles

Other editions:
Currently none



EXPOSARUS

DINOSAUR BONES AND GEMS



Dinosaurs are always big attractions for visitors, so we are museum directors and compete for the best dinosaur fossils and gems.

Each player starts with his starting tile and museum tile, plus 1 paleontologist, 1 claim disc and 10 explorers. The Dino tiles are heaped loosely and face down in the middle, one per player is

turned up. At the start of your turn you can call explorers back into the base camp; if you do so one explorer is sent to the National Museum and no longer available. Then you can turn up a face-down Dino tile - as often as you want to and are able to - and mark it with an explorer or - once in a game - with your claim disc which saves the tile for your

exclusive exploration.

In order to excavate a fossil, that is, a Dino tile once per turn, you place as many explorers there as marked or still necessary. Then you add the tile to your museum, which can have a maximum size of 4x tiles. When gem circles are completed by placing the new tile you put the corresponding gems there. Your own explorers go to your museum tile, other explorers back to their base camp. Once in the game you can use your paleontologist to place fewer explorers for a certain fossil. At the end of the game you score the number of gems of a color times the number of identical, adjacent Dino tiles; each color is scored separately. Explorers in the base camp score 1 point each, an unused claim disc 2 and an unused paleontologist 3 points.

Exposaurus is simply nice, a pretty set collecting game with some tactics when placing the explorers; thanks to the simple basic rules it can be absolutely recommended as a game for families. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Ron van Dalen
Artist: Ron van Dalen
Price: ca. 35 Euro
Publisher: Mücke Spiele 2011
www.muecke-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Set collecting game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: nein

Comments:
Winner of www.spielmaterial.de competition * Dice version, with removing Dino tiles * Good for families with a bit of gaming experience

Compares to:
Pergamon for exploring and placing explorers, set collection games

Other editions:
Currently none



FLINKER WILLI

A AS IN ANT, APPLE OR ACCOUNTANT

7+

Flinker Willi is made up from 13 wooden disks of different height and a funny hat including a clown's hat. 21 letter chips are randomly laid out, showing the letter side - if you deem it necessary you can remove more difficult letters like X, Y, Z or Q from the game before you start. Flinker Willi is placed on a randomly chosen letter and the

game can begin.

The active player turns over the chip next to Flinker Willi in clockwise direction to show the category: Profession, color, hobby or leisure time activity, male first name, female first name, clothing, town, foodstuff or animal. Then you roll the die and all players in their mind count that many chips, starting at the chip



next to Flinker Willi in counter-clockwise direction. When you have determined the correct letter you try to find a word fitting the category and starting with the correct letter. When you think that you have found a correct word you grab for Flinker Willi. But take care that he keeps his head - if he loses it the round ends immediately. If he keeps his head you can name your word and all players decide together if it fits the letter and the category. When all is correct you can take a wooden disc of your choice off Willi. The topic chip is turned back to the letter side and Willi is placed on the letter that was used just now. If you are first to collect four wooden discs, you win.

A new way of category selection, having Flinker Willi running along the letters and providing a reaction mechanism, well combined with vocabulary and knowledge and nicely chosen categories! Take care, with every disc he loses Willi gets a bit more wobbly. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
7+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Heinz Meister
Artist: Oliver Freudenreich
Price: ca. 10 Euro
Publisher: Kosmos 2012
www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

Word/association game
For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
Willi offers a nice mechanism of selection and reward * Good topics, fitting the age group * Variable difficulty due to preselecting letters

Compares to:
All game with associations on letters and terms

Other editions:
Currently none



FLOSSEN HOCH!

FOLK FESTIVAL AT THE SOUTH POLE!

4+

The inmates of the Southern Seas dance, dive and romp, but highlight of the festival is the fish race of the penguins, in which they try to pull the longest colorful fish out of the water.

Each player is given a penguin and all fish of the same color and puts them into the slits of the Polar Sea in the middle of the board. When this is done

fish bones and the rainbow fish are placed.

Then you roll the die in turn: When the result is a color then you are looking for a fish of this color; beginning with the active player each player tries to pull a fish of this color out of the sea. Should the result of the roll be a fish each player tries to find either the rainbow fish or a fish of



his own color. When the shark fin is rolled, you cry "Shark alert" and all players can fish at the same time and try to pull a fish as long as possible out of the waves.

When all have taken a fish they are scored: If you got a fish of the correct color or the rainbow fish you may move your penguin: Your fish is placed with its tail end next to your penguin and then you place the penguin into the slit next to the head of the fish. When his slit is taken you put the penguin into the nearest free one. If you encounter an ice flow you jump over it. In case of Shark alert all players may move their penguin, unless they caught fish bones. Then all players put back the fish into any slit. If you are first to cross the finish line you win.

What a way to use memo mechanisms! A fantastic implementation of a standard game principle! Topic and implementation go together hand in glove and the way to determine how far the penguin moves is a super idea! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
4+

TIME:
10+

Designer: Edith Grein-Böttcher
Artist: Claudia Stöckl
Price: ca. 23 Euro
Publisher: Zoch Verlag 2012
www.zoch-verlag.com

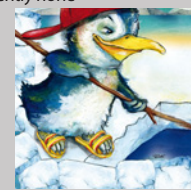
EVALUATION

Memo game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Ideal combination of topic and mechanism * Enchanting components * Fantastic mechanism to move the penguins

Compares to:
Vorsicht Flamingo, Der Maulwurf und sein Versteckspiel and other games with part of the pawns hidden beneath the board

Other editions:
Currently none



JOHNNY & CO

JOHN DEERE

3+

Johnny the Trekker lives with his friends Corny Combine, Alli Gator and Danny Dozer on a wonderful farm; all four of them are always jolly and working hard, and when they want to have fun then they play Hide & Seek together with the farm animals. And now it is Johnny's turn to seek! You are asked to help him. The quartet tiles are shuffled

face down and spread on the table. Each player takes one of the placement boards. In your first turn you roll the die and turn up as many tiles as the die indicates. When there are two or more identical tiles among the ones you turned up you place all of them on your own board. If you turn up tiles that all show different images you chose one



image and put it on your board. The tiles you do not want or cannot use are put back face-down on the table. When it is your turn again, you look for the missing tiles showing the same image as the tile(s) on your board, turning again up as many tiles as the die indicates. There are four tiles of each image. As each player can only collect one image you must always put back images you cannot use. When you have found all four tiles with the same image, you set them aside and can start anew with a new image. When you roll Johnny you give your board to your neighbor, but keep completed sets.

When all sets of four tiles have been found, you win with most tiles.

Johnny & Co offers an enchanting mix of Lotto and Memo for the very young players, easy and cute. The green trekker is also known as a toy and therefore already a friend. And, by the way, one learns and can remember that „Combine“ is a „Mähdscher“. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4AGE:
3+TIME:
10+**Designer:** Tom Espen**Artist:** John Deere Corporation**Price:** ca. 6 Euro**Publisher:** Schmidt Spiele 2012www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

Spotting game
For children

Version: multi

Rules: de en es fr it nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

License John Deere, maker of farm machinery * Simplest of rules for toddlers * Good mix of Lotto, Happy Families and Memo

Compares to:

All games of Lotto, Happy Families and Memo

Other editions:

Currently none



JURASSIK

FOUR CARDS FOR A DINOSAUR SKELETON

5+

This card game takes us back into the time of the dinosaurs; we look for skeletons and want to become famous because of them. Action cards and dinosaur cards are shuffled together with „start of excavation“ card and then laid out in a 8x6 grid. Then you remove the card „start of excavation“ from the grid to form the first gap. The active

player takes an accessible card which is a card that borders the gap, out of the excavation grid. Dinosaur cards are laid out before the players, a complete set of four cards is turned over. Action cards are turned over within the grid; rocks remain in the grid; the other action cards are implemented and then taken out of the grid. You can use them to:



Steal a card from another player, swap a card with that of another player or discard one of your own cards; in all these actions complete skeletons are exempt. For the action card Double Move you take two dinosaur cards out of the excavation grid, you cannot take an action card.

If the action card cannot be implemented, because, for instance, you have no single card to discard or swap, you simply discard the action card.

When the last accessible dinosaur card is removed according to the rules you score for your dinosaur cards: 1 point for each single card, 3 points for two cards and 6 points for three cards of the same dinosaur; a complete skeleton of four cards scores 10 points.

Jurassik is a simple set collecting game, if you like, it is a Happy Families version, in which you do not ask for cards but collect them from the grid; a game neatly targeted at children with a simple mechanism and an interesting topic. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4AGE:
5+TIME:
15+**Designer:** Charles Chevallier**Artist:** David Boniffacy**Price:** ca. 10 Euro**Publisher:** Ilopeli 2011www.ilopeli.com

EVALUATION

Card collecting game
For children

Version: multi

Rules: de en es fr it

In-game text: no

Comments:

Unusual graphics for a children's game * Interesting topic for children * Includes loose hologram cover * Simple, easy rules

Compares to:

All set collecting games, Happy Families

Other editions:

Mindok, Czech Republik



KINGS OF MITHRIL

**A KINGDOM BENEATH
AND AROUND A MOUNTAIN**

We want to be Dwarf King and build our kingdom around and deep within Mithril Mountain. You start the game with 1x Barley, Metal and Gold. In your turn you 1) buy buildings - mine buildings for 1x Barley, surface buildings for 1x Metal and any building for 1x Gold. Bought Buildings must be placed in the same turn, on the surface or below according to

type and must continue at least one duct or path, but can never connect paths or duct networks of two different players. You can give a back a building instead of placing it. Forge, Village or Tower end a path. Buildings placed let you place production shields and/or draw point cards; the shields bring you more Barley, Metal and Gold. When you close



the last open route in your kingdom, you draw two army cards and stop playing till voting occurs.

2) You move the bailiff according to a die roll and should he pass the timer you remove a timer chip; then the bailiff hands out resources for production shields equal to his location and a building according to the die result. When there is no timer chip for the bailiff to remove the voting starts: all reveal their cards and first get crowns for army cards and then for majorities at other building projects. This voting is repeated until only two players are left; in each turn the player with the fewest crowns is out, which can change majorities for the next turn. When you win the last turn you are elected king!

For a resources management game Kings of Mithril has an unusually high element of chance for provisions and buildings, the final scoring is usual, but again, not very projectable, just like the rest of the game. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Esa Wiik

Artist: Esa Wiik, Matti Jokihaara

Price: ca. 30 Euro

Publisher: Mindwarrior Games 11
www.mindwarriorgames.com

EVALUATION

Resources management
With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de en fi nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

Beautiful components
* Very high element of chance, not much planning possible * Needs some gaming experience

Compares to:

Resources management with majority scoring

Other editions:

Currently none



KLEINER FUCHS GANZ GROSS

SUN, MOON AND SHAMAN JOIN THE GAME

3↑

American Indian boy Little Fox must pass the exam of the clan shaman in order to become a clan Chief like his father. Players help him to complete five tasks. Task tiles and special tiles are laid out in a circular path, around this path 28 bush tiles are arranged face-down, featuring items also shown on the task tiles. Little Fox starts his journey

on the Shaman tile. You roll and move Little Fox the resulting number of steps. When Little Fox ends his move on a task tile you must try to turn up a bush tile showing the item on the task tile. If you turn up the correct bush tile you have completed a task and store the tile next to your Tipi. When the bush tile shows another item you leave it



open-faced in the display. When the item you look for is already visible you take this tile. If Little Fox ends his move on the Sun tile you turn up three tiles and then roll again, move and search the item. If the move ends on the Moon tile, you must turn all bush tiles face-down again and then you roll, move and search for the item reached. When Little Fox ends his move on the Shaman tile he can take a tile of his choice from the display and store it next to the Tipi. The first player to collect five tiles - they need not all be different, as you can complete the same task more than once - wins the game.

In a version you turn back down bush tiles immediately if they do not fit the task or you apply different rules for the Sun and Moon tiles.

Little Big Fox offers a harmonious combination of standard mechanisms, memo fun with an attractive topic and attractive design, as in all Haba games. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
3-8

TIME:
20+

Designer: Edith Grein-Böttcher

Artist: Stephan Baumann

Price: ca. 9 Euro

Publisher: Haba 2012
www.haba.de

EVALUATION

Roll, move & memo
For children

Version: multi

Rules: de en es fr it nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

Attractive standard topic *
Nicely combined standard mechanisms * Pretty design * Topic interesting for children

Compares to:

All memo games including additional actions

Other editions:

Currently none



KNIFFEL JUBILÄUMS-EDITION

INCLUDES KNIFFEL EXTREME



On occasion of the 40 Year Jubilee of this dice classic Schmidt published a limited Anniversary Edition, featuring both Kniffel and Kniffel Extreme in an elegant tin.

The basic mechanism of **Kniffel** is to roll dice to achieve combinations which you mark on your scoring sheet. Combinations are identical numbers and those

known from Poker. For the first roll you use all five dice. Then you can re-roll any number of dice. After a maximum of three rolls you must mark the score on the sheet. If you, for instance have rolled two Fours and three Twos you can either score the Fours (8) or the Twos (6) or the three Twos as "Three of a Kind" (14) or a Full House (25). The score sheet has



two parts, one for the numbers and one for the combinations of Three-of-a-Kind, Four-of-a-Kind, Full House, Small and Big Straight and Kniffel, which are five identical numbers. If you achieve more than one Kniffel during the game you can use them for a joker or for additional points. When you manage a score of at least 63 with the number part, you score a bonus of 35 points.

For **Kniffel Extreme** you roll 6 dice, one of them is a ten-sided die offering new choices and different probabilities. Three chips can be used for additional rolls, if you hand one in, you can roll a fourth time in your turn. When you cannot score a proper result, you must strike of a box on the score sheet. When the last box is marked you add up points and bonuses.

A nice and elegant new edition of a classic game! The box offers three more variants, among them a game called Treffer, by Rüdiger Dorn. All in all attractive and familiar fund for all the family! ☒

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-8

AGE:
8+

TIME:
var

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Price: ca. 22 Euro

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele 2012

www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

Dice game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:

Classic dice game * Lists five different ways to play: Kniffel, Kniffel extreme, Treffer, Mäxchen and Chicago

Compares to:

All other editions of Kniffel

Other editions:

Kniffel Extreme in the Roll & Play series



LAST NIGHT ON EARTH

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

The players guiding the heroes must survive the night and co-operate in order to defeat the Zombies. If you are the Zombie player you must further disagreement among heroes and turn them into Zombies. The core game features different scenarios in analogy to screenplays. Each round comprises two turns, heroes and zombies. The game

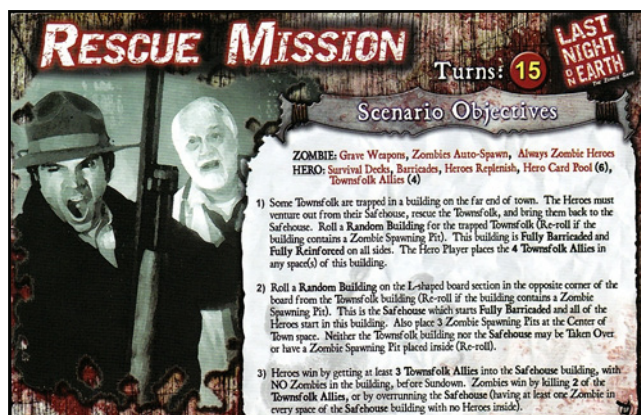
ends when the goal of a scenario has been achieved or when the sun marker reaches the end of the track.

Survival of the Fittest brings new counter, new cards, re-inforcement and supply markers, ammunition and armory markers as well as new hero cards and new zombie cards; supplemented by new cards for

Unique Items, Survival Tactics and cards for the new kind of weapon, Grave Weapons. New rules deal with Double-Handed Items/beidhändige Gegenstände, Sacrifice/Opfer, Sewer/Kanalisations-Regeln, Stockpile/Vorrats-Karten and Combining Items/Kombinieren von Gegenständen. Zombies can overcome the new barricades only with a roll of 4+.

Heroes pass a barricade by removing a barricade reinforcement. Four new scenarios - Search for the Truth with 17 rounds, Supply Run with 17 rounds, Hunker Down with 16 rounds and Rescue Mission with 15 rounds - use one or more of the new special rules; in addition to all that there are optional rules, which you can use in the scenarios, but only if all players have agreed at the start which rules to use.

For fans of the genre and for fans of Last Night on Earth Survival of the Fittest is a thrilling and indispensable expansions, which introduces new details and manifold new features, Grave Weapons against Unique Items



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
12+

TIME:
120+

Designer: Jason C. Hill

Artist: Jack Scott Hill

Price: ca. 25 Euro

Publisher: Flying Frog Prod. 10

www.hds-fantasy.de

EVALUATION

Zombie adventure game
With friends
Version: multi
Rules: en es fr pl
In-game text: yes

Comments:

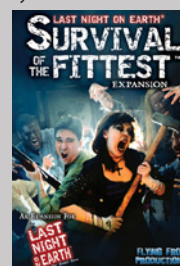
Expansion * Needs basic game to play * Four new scenarios

Compares to:

Last Night on Earth Core Game

Other editions:

Currently none



LUPIN THE 3RD

ON THE PROWL IN BURMA AND SWITZERLAND

Not the Gentleman Thief, as we know him, is prowling across the board; the game is based on a decades old Manga-style comic series by Kazuhiko Kato. Each player picks up the embodiment of one character, represented by a nicely painted miniature, there is always one player for Zenigata, and one or more for the gang.

On a double-sided board you

can play the „Ruby Red“ scenario, set in former Burma, or „The Great Bank Robbery“, set in Lugano, Switzerland. All characters move orthogonally; the members of the gang must reach the treasure and keep themselves hidden as well as they can from Inspector Zenigata and his police force. In order to be invisible to the police forces, gang mem-



ber must stand on a spot outside the shooting range of Zenigata. You win together as a member of the game or alone as police force. The gang has 13 rounds to move off the board with the treasure; the police must hinder at least one member of the gang to leave the board. Fujiko Mine can try to betray the other gang members and try to escape with the treasure on her own. In a round Zenigata moves first and then has standard actions in any order; then the gang members move and have standard actions, transport, use equipment and play action cards. This is followed by actions specific to the scenario and you can - if possible - take the treasure, move the round marker or end the game. If you like Lupin and if you like Manga, you will like this game; it transports the flair very well due to the attractive components; but think twice before going alone as Fujiko, because if you do not succeed, Zenigata has won in any case! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
14+

TIME:
60+

Designer: Pierluigi Frumusa
Artist: G. Di Michele, D. Lazzari
Price: ca. 40 Euro
Publisher: Ghenos Games 2011
www.ghenosgames.com

EVALUATION

Position game
With friends
Version: multi
Rules: en it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Very attractive components
* Some gaming experience necessary * Flair of the comics nicely transported
* Zenigata always plays alone * Two levels of difficulty

Compares to:
Scotland Yard and other games with partly hidden movement

Other editions:
Currently none



MEINE ERSTEN SPIELE

DER MAULWURF SCHAUT GENAU



The little mole has four best friends - rabbit, mouse, hedgehog and frog; those four friends face many adventures together and - using the 32 tiles and four placement boards - you can relive those adventures, be it playing in the meadow or in the water, holding a picnic or working in the garden.

There are different ways to play,

but always you must find the tiles corresponding to the placement boards.

In the version **Schau genau!** the tiles are displayed open-faced and randomly spread; players in turn pick up a tile from the table; if it fits the board of the player he can place it; if not the tile is put back onto the table.

In the **Bingo** version the tiles are

stacked face-down and turned up one by one. If a tile fits onto your board you say your name and receive the tile. If you are first to collect all 8 tiles for your board you shout „Bingo“.

The **Finde fix!** version is again played with open-faced tiles; all players look closely at their own board and then simultaneously look for corresponding tiles on the table. If you are first to collect all eight tiles you win.

In the **Memo** version all players again look closely at their own board and then turn them over. Then the tiles from the face-down stack are turned up one by one; if you believe that it fits your board you take it. When several players claim the tile it is put at the bottom of the stack. When all players have eight tiles the boards are turned over and you win if you collect most correct tiles.

This is a pretty collection of simple, early memo and assignment games with standard mechanisms, training perception and close observation. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
3-6

TIME:
10+

Designer: not stated
Artist: Zdenek Miller
Price: ca. 10 Euro
Publisher: Ravensburger 2012
www.ravensburger.de

EVALUATION

Assignment game
For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
Familiar characters *
Challenge and age go well together * Standard mechanisms

Compares to:
Lotto, memo and bingo variants for the age group 3+

Other editions:
Currently none



MELTDOWN 2020

ENDANGERED REACTORS
AND EVACUATIONS



Players must save population from an area that is threatened by an atomic catastrophe. The landscape is laid out with 12 tiles, airports must not be on adjacent tiles. Persons and vehicles are set into marked spots; the game is played in days; on each day all vehicles move, reactors suffer leaks or are repaired and persons get radiation sickness.

In order to save persons you must transport them to an airport - vehicles can pass other vehicles, but cannot come to a stop on a square with a vehicle and cannot move directly through a reactor spot; airports are an exception, they have unlimited capacity for vehicles. Buses move up to two steps and transport driver + four persons;



a car moves up to three steps and transports three persons. The intensity of radiation sickness varies with the intensity of radiation which depends on the distance from a leaking reactor; when a person suffers a radiation dose of 3 Sievert (the doses from different days and different reactors accumulate!) he dies. Drivers of vehicles are protected and do not get radiation sickness, but they die when they suffer one dose of 3 Sievert from one reactor. When persons reach the airport they are considered to be evacuated and safe and are placed before the respective player, in a position according to their health status. When a reactor carries five radiation discs or you would need a total of 16 radiation discs, the game ends and you count your survivors.

A dense, thrilling game with a very up-to-date topic; the catastrophic reactor die sits at your back and keeps you on the run relentlessly! Logistic talent is necessary! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
40+

Designer: Corné van Moorsel

Artist: Ron van Dalen

Price: ca. 33 Euro

Publisher: Cwali 2011

www.cwali.nl

EVALUATION

Logistics game
With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr nl
In-game text: no

Comments:

Up-to-date topic * Nicely and challengingly implemented * Simple rules * High factor of luck due to the reactor die

Compares to:

Flash Point Fire Rescue and other games with logistics, cumulative negative effects or dramatic limitation of resources

Other editions:

Currently none



MIXFIX

SHIP-SHIP-SHEEP

7+

MixFix belongs into the genre of card shedding games and demands correct announcement as a reaction to cards in combination with dice.

The game features four big dice, each one with one symbol each of ship, sheep, fish and frog and two empty sides. The 40 cards show those symbols in different numbers and combinations.

Each player is dealt 6 cards, the rest is stacked open-faced; all players, too, lay out their cards open-faced.

You roll the dice and each player tries to discard a card to the stack; a correct card shows all symbols of the dice result, regardless of what else is on the cards. If you roll two fish and a frog, a correct card must show at

least two fish and a frog. But that is not enough, you must be first to place the card and name the result of the dice roll loudly and correctly; in this case fish-fish-frog or frog-fish-fish or fish-frog-fish. This is the only way you can make a correct announcement, you must name each symbol separately, the order is unimportant. An announcement of "two fish and one frog" is incorrect and not valid!

If you stop, stutter or make any other mistake you must take back your card and draw another one from the pile. When you are first to discard all your cards you win.

Rarely, we have laughed so much while playing such a simple game! You would not believe how difficult it is to say „Schaf-Schiff-Fisch“ and say it faster than the other players. A wonderful family game, ideal for in between and for your vacation, you can play it with holiday friends in English, as you can see from my description, but don't believe that Fish-Ship-Sheep is easier than Fisch-Schiff-Schaf! ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-6

AGE:
7+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Andrew & Jack Lawson

Artist: Arthur Wagner

Price: ca. 10 Euro

Publisher: Piatnik 2012

www.piatnik.com

EVALUATION

Card shedding game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de fr hu
In-game text: no

Comments:

Handy and easy to carry along * Very simple rules * Lots of fun * High allure to play again

Compares to:

First game in this combination of mechanism, or else all reaction or card shedding games

Other editions:

Currently none



MONOPOLY MILLIONÄR

WHO EARNS HIS MILLION FIRST?

8+

A new edition of Monopoly with a new condition to win the game: Not to ruin all others, but to be the first to own one Million cash! This is accompanied by a nice idea for your movers; you can upgrade your little boat in stages to a super yacht to enhance your chance to win; you go from basic provision to Newly Rich and Old Money!

The game board has been adapted to the new topic, the cities are marked in jewel colors and the sites have names like Diamond Hill or Surfer's Bay or Glitter Bleach! At the start of the game the lots are not empty, but filled with Fortune cards which you turn over and implement, when you end your turn on a lot; and you now have Million-



aire Lifestyle cards and Chance cards replacing the usual event cards and chance cards.

The basic rules are: When your move ends on a free lot you must buy it or auction it; you can trade and sell lots to others or swap them with other players. When you end on Go or pass it you earn money and can upgrade your mover. Houses and hotels are attractive clear pieces in green and red, you can buy houses and hotels also outside your own turn, and of course also trade with other players outside your turn.

The enhancing of movers pays off in many ways; the income on Go and the result of some Fortune cards depends on the status of your mover; otherwise standard Monopoly rules apply. Once again Hasbro has managed a felicitous and optically incredibly attractive version of the classic roll & move game, which all will like, as the aim of the game is more positive and more fun! Enhancing the movers is a fun idea, all in all a tidbit for fans of Monopoly. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
60+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Price: ca. 50 Euro

Publisher: Hasbro/Parker 2012
www.hasbro.de

EVALUATION

Roll & Move
For families
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Very attractive components corresponding to the topic * Unchanged basic rules * Changed winning conditions

Compares to:
Other editions of Monopoly

Other editions:
Monopoly Millionaire Game, Hasbro USA



MONSTERTORTE

COLLECT SUGAR MARBLES
TO TRIM YOUR CAKE

5+

Trim, trim, trim your cake - this is the motto of this quick reaction game straight from the monsters' kitchen where all is going topsy-turvy and the sugar marbles used for decorating cup cakes have just fallen into the mixing bowl. All sugar marbles, represented by five wooden marbles each in six colors are poured

into the mixing bowl provided by the box bottom. Each child is given a spoon with a hole and a wooden bowl representing a cup cake tin; finally, the top cake card from the stack is turned up. Now all players try at the same time and as quickly as they can to fish the colored marbles out of the bowl that are necessary to decorate the cake as pictured



on the current cake card; the holes in the spoons are a nice assisting feature for getting the marbles out. You are allowed to use one hand only, the other hand you must put behind your back, and if you take a wrong color out of the mixing bowl you must put all marbles in your tin back into the mixing bowl. The fastest player to collect all necessary marbles for the top card gets the card; if you are first to collect five cards you win the game and have won the title of best Monster Baker!

Monstertorte is beautiful just like every other Haba game, featuring sturdy components for easy handling by children as well as a nice background story. The game trains hand-eye coordination, recognition of colors and speed of reaction, too, and also needs balancing ability to get the marble into your bowl and on top of all that it is fun to play, a lot of fun to play - the only thing missing is the dough to lick! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
5+

TIME:
15+

Designer: S. Rohner, C. Wolf

Artist: Felix Scheinberger

Price: ca. 17 Euro

Publisher: Haba 2012
www.haba.de

EVALUATION

Reaction and dexterity
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en es fr it nl
In-game text: no

Comments:
New edition of Tolle Torte
* Stable and handy components * High allure to play again * Trains reaction, balance and colors

Compares to:
Tolle Torte and other collection games featuring dexterity and reaction

Other editions:
Currently none



NAMNAM

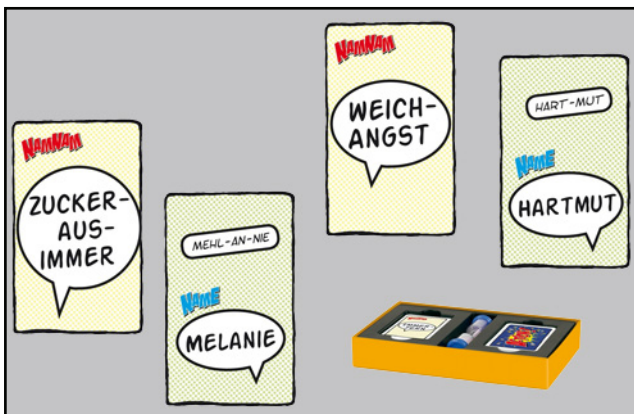
DIVORCE SIREN? SAIL CONTAINER?



If you are wondering what might be the meaning of the subtitle, well that's easy- they are Nam-Nams, first names that have been hidden to form funny and unusual phrases and combinations. You take a first name and code it according to the following few rules: You either look for opposites, or for associations or you translate into other languages, always syl-

lables or easily recognized parts of the name.

When you play with up to five players you shuffle 15-25 Nam-Nam cards, depending on the number of players, together with 3-5 action cards. You draw a card and read it out, if you guess the name you get the card, the game master can give hints. Action cards that appear relate to the next



NamNam, they just provide chaos, plain and simple chaos - you are assigned a certain noise and must make this from now on before giving a guess; when you forget it the point goes to the game master or the opposing team. Or the game master reads out the syllables in an order of his choice!

In team play you adhere to the taboo mechanisms, cards not guessed are points for the opposing team; action cards are assigned separately and can be used against the opposing team.

Oh, the names in the subtitle, well, that's easy:

Robin - Row Bin - Sail Container
Marybelle - Marry bell - Divorce Siren

Very easy, isn't it? After a few names you get it, and know what you could try to arrive at a solution. Oh, by the way, for my own name, I have found a solution, too, it is not very funny, but I ended up with Label Damaging.

NamNam is a funny and witty challenge for in between, the mechanics invite you to experiment, also with and in other languages. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3+

AGE:
12+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Jan Köppen
Artist: Silke Klemt
Price: ca. 15 Euro
Publisher: Moses 2012
www.moses.de

EVALUATION

Language & word game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Association on thinking fun
* Make up your own explanations * Hybrids between languages are possible

Compares to:
First game of this kind

Other editions:
Currently none



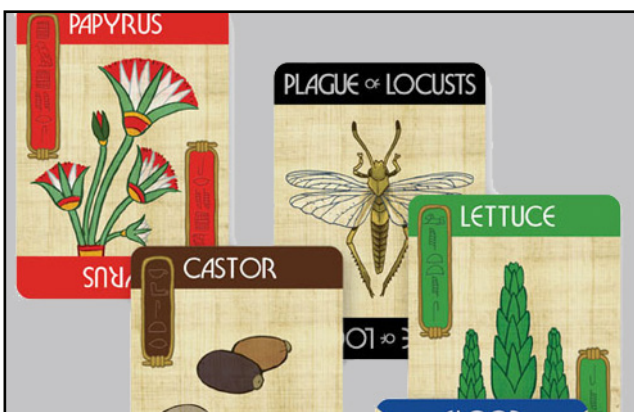
NILE DELUXOR

THE GAME OF ANCIENT AGRICULTURE

8+

Players use cards in order to plant crops in acres and to harvest. There are seven different crops - Papyrus, wheat, salad, beans, flax, grapes and onions - as well as speculation cards and commodities stones and monuments for the Monument Expansion. A turn comprises phases Flood, Harvest, Trade, Plant/Speculate and drawing two cards. For Flood

you turn up the top card of the stack: If you have planted this crop, you harvest the top card of that crop into your stock. In the Trade phase you can discard two cards from hand or stock and draw a new card or discard two cards and replace the current Flood card with a new one. Plant/Speculate is regulated by the Flood card, crop pictured



on it cannot be planted and you can only newly plant what currently is not planted elsewhere on the table, but you can add to crops already planted. Instead of planting you can also speculate: You guess that cards you speculate with will have at least one crop in common with the next Flood card; if you succeed you get cards.

Plague of Locust must be implemented immediately, it destroys the field that at this moment holds most crop cards. When the draw pile has been used up as often as there are players the game is scored: You sort your stock into crops and lay the stacks out in ascending order from left to right, no cards in a crop would be the first stack! You win with the most cards in the left-most stack.

Nile deluxor offers - despite restrictions in the plant/speculate phase - simple rules for a family game and yet enough depth and strategy for experienced players, a good „light“ card game for discerning players. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
8+

TIME:
30+

Designer: D. Callister, J. Mathe
Artist: C. Whelon, C. Cardner
Price: ca. 25 Euro
Publisher: Minion Games 2011
www.miniongames.com

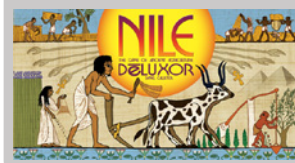
EVALUATION

Set collection game
For families
Version: en
Rules: de en kr
In-game text: no

Comments:
New edition of Nile * 2 new crops, onions and grapes
* Includes Monument expansion

Compares to:
Nile

Other editions:
Currently none



NOX

ELIMINATE THE 12 BY PLACING THE 7

8+

90 cards in three colors show numbers from 1 to 15, each number is present 6 times and shows only one color. Cards are shuffled face-down and you are given three cards, the rest is draw pile. You play one of your three cards into your own display or that of another player and draw a card. You can enlarge a display or cover

a card with another card of the same color. Two cards or stacks in a display showing the same number are combined into one stack. An example: If player A has a green 7 and a green 12 in his display he is in danger that another player covers the green 12 with a green 12, thus creates a second stack of value 7 and therefore combines both stacks;



this loses 12 points for Player A and he has one card/stack less in his display. When you have 6 cards or stacks in your display or when the draw pile and all card hands are empty you add the values of the top cards in your display, but only if you have all three colors in your display. If not, you do not score this round. When you top 150 points the game ends and the player with the highest score wins. In a version only the player with the highest score of the round notes his score and you play up to 100 points.

Despite the Comic-blood-curling graphics and story Nox is an abstract placement game with numbers, which gives a lot of advantage to players with a good memory for numbers, cards, and colors, because only five of 15 numbers are in one color, e.g. 1, 4, 9, 11 and 15 in blue. The chance element in drawing cards and the target of a three-colored display don't make things easier. A fast and fun game with hidden depths, shoals and abysses! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Steffen Brückner

Artist: O. + S. Freudenreich

Price: ca. 8 Euro

Publisher: Huch! and friends 12

www.huchandfriends.de

EVALUATION

Card placement
For families

Version: multi

Rules: de en fr nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

Abstract despite the topic
* Nice mixture of card luck and tactics * Good memory for cards is an advantage

Compares to:

Other card placement game with display optimization

Other editions:

Currently none



PHOTO PARTY

BE IN THE AIR WHEN THE CAMERA CLICKS!



Cocktail Games is a guarantee for unusual games and Photo Party is the latest proof for it! One player is named game master, he takes the pictures! Yes, he takes pictures, you need a digital camera for this game, even one with a self-timer; you can use one without, then the photographer counts loudly from 10 to 5 and then in a speed

of his own choice from 5-0 before releasing the shutter. At the start of the game the game master defines the edges of the picture, so that players know which positions will guarantee them to be in the pictures, and then he chooses 12 task cards. For instance: Only your foot or arm may be visible, cover eyes of other players with your hands



or arms and score for each player with hidden eyes, or - as a team of two form the Vitruvian Man by Leonardo, or run out of the picture and back into it before the click, at least one of your eyes must be in the picture! The pictures are taken one by one, after reading out the task the game master waits for some time so that players can arrange themselves. The completed cards are set out in a row for scoring. When all pictures are taken you can score directly via computer or camera display or meet in the corresponding groups in social medias. You score what is in the picture, the yellow figurines on the task cards show you which positions score.

Photo Party is an absolutely unusual combination of group play and modern techniques including modern social Media, and also an absolutely crazy game that provides a lot of crazy fun, provided you are mobile and fast and can understand and implement instructions instantly! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
6-15

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: M. Tabourin, L. Escoffier

Artist: Olivier Fagnère

Price: ca. 10 Euro

Publisher: Cocktail / Hutter 2012

www.hutter-trade.com

EVALUATION

Party Game
With friends

Version: de

Rules: de fr gr

In-game text: yes

Comments:

Extremely unusual and creative idea * Digital camera is necessary * Social media integrated into the game

Compares to:

First game of this kind

Other editions:

Cocktail Games, France, Kaissa Chess & Games, Greece



SCHAFKÖPFCHEN

THE CULT CARD GAME

8+

In this children's version of the cult card game „Schafkopf“ there is one important fact to remember: „Tall beats small“! Three meadow cards form a track, the card with shepherd and hut comes is the finish. The dealer gives eight cards to each player. In a round you play eight tricks, and a round consists of three phases: In Phase 1 - Dice -

you determine the trump color; for a result of blue, green, red or yellow you should try to collect most flowers in your tricks; for white as a result the dealer determines the trump color. When black is rolled there is no trump color for the round and you win the round with the fewest flowers in your tricks. In Phase 2 you play your cards; first the dealer



and then the winner of the latest trick leads and the others add a card. The cards showing „Lamb's Head“, a giraffe or an elephant are always trump and are augmented by the cards in the current trump colors; when trump is lead you must play trump, if you can. When a color is lead you must answer this with a card in this color; if this is not possible you can play trump or any other card. If you played the highest-ranking card in a trick you win the trick. In Phase 3 you score the tricks: All count their flowers; depending on the goal of the round you win with the most of the fewest flowers and move your sheep one step along the track. The first at the finish wins.

Schafköpfchen not only is a fantastic introduction for children into the world of trick taking games, but also an ideal family game with enough allure for adults and a high educational effect for children, nicely illustrated fun spanning generations. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Miltenberger, Wallner
Artist: Andrea Mangold
Price: ca. 10 Euro
Publisher: IQ-Spiele 2012
www.iq-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Card game
For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
Children's version of Schafkopf * Educational emphasis on planning and implementation * Nice animal illustrations

Compares to:
All simple trick-taking games

Other editions:
Currently none



SHAKE SHAKE

SHAKE TOWER

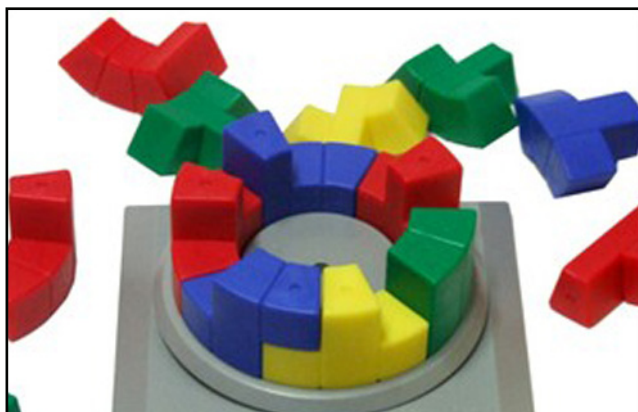
6+

Korean Pavilion at Essen - since three years this is a source of interesting game and some surprises, and so it was last year: There were two editions of the same game on show - in the New Releases Show Shake Tower was presented; at the Pavilion I was given Shake Shake; both are differently packed editions of the same game, a Tetris ver-

sion on a wobbly basis. Even the publisher has changed, 2009 it was MagicBean for Shake Shake, 2011 it is new Aulum for Shake Tower.

On a square base sits a second, round base, not fixed, but loosely and mobile. In analogy to Tetris all players build a cylindrical tower on that basis together. Two players are each given 16

pieces in two colors, in a game of three or four you play with eight pieces of one color. You play with one hand and may not stabilize sliding blocks and furthermore you should try to place your blocks in a way that the next player cannot easily fill the gap. In a variant of the game cards pose puzzles, which you should solve by combining blocks to the formations in demand; the result are shapes/constructions similar to animals. Another version is a solo game in which you combine all pieces on the round board - this time flat on the table - into a closed cylinder of even height and a flat, even top border surface. Regardless of which version you play, you always train balance and a sense of equilibrium, especially when building together on the wobbly base! And, in any case, logical thinking in three dimensions and also sense for shapes and furthermore problem solving, too, so Shake Tower is an attractive pastime whatever way you look at it. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
6+

TIME:
10+

Designer: not stated
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 25 Euro
Publisher: MagicBean 09/Aulum 11
www.iaulum.co.kr

EVALUATION

Dexterity
For families
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Published in several versions * Currently as Shake Tower at Aulum * Trains balance, logical thinking, 3D perception and equilibrium

Compares to:
Tetris and other assembling games with blocks

Other editions:
Currently none



SHAKESPEARE CARDUTA

COMEDY AND TRAGEDY

7+

„Hyakunin Isshu“ is a traditional Japanese card game originating in the 13th century, using old short Japanese poems; it uses only word cards, on which there is printed half of one poem. This game developed into „Karuta“ in the 16th century, which is still played in Japanese families and originally was considered to be a children's game. Karuta was

played with 48 word cards and 48 picture cards, each picture card showed only one of 48 Japanese signs. Shakespeare Carduta is a modern version of this mechanism and uses quotations from Shakespeare's works. There is one set of cards with quotations from his tragedies and one with quotations from the comedies, and a



combined set with 48 word cards and 48 picture cards. The picture cards are spread out, you can use any number of cards. Each picture-word-card only bears one half of the quotation, the complete quotation is printed on the word cards.

A game master not participating in the game reads out half of the quotation not on the picture card, it is printed in grey, and all players now simultaneously look for the picture-word-card which completes the quotation. If you are first to find the card you keep it. If you take a wrong card you put it back and are out of play for this quotation. When only one card is left on the table you win with most cards. In a version without a game master each player holds a word card, reads it and gives it to the player who finds the picture, and then draws a new card.

Not an every-day game and not a game for every day, but fascinating for fans of Shakespeare as well as for all those interested in games from the Far East. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-6

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Ayako Yoshimi

Artist: Enara Uribarren

Price: ca. 10 Euro pro Set

Publisher: DTP Publishing 2007

<http://japonbrandgamers-jp.com/>

EVALUATION

Literary game
For families
Version: en
Rules: de en fr jp
In-game text: yes

Comments:

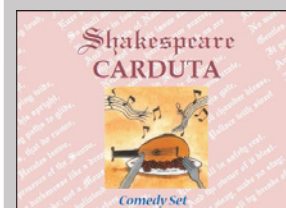
Two sets for comedy and tragedy * Presented at Essen 2011 * Knowledge of Shakespeare is advantageous, but not necessary

Compares to:

First game of this kind

Other editions:

Combined Japanese edition



SHRIMP

SEVEN SHRIMPS ON THREE CARDS
ARE A SHRIMP COCKTAIL

7+

81 cards with shrimp showing four criteria are distributed evenly: The four Criteria are: color - green, purple, orange; size - small, medium, large; number - one, two or three, or origin - Japan, USA or France. In your turn you reveal the top card from your stack and put it on one of the three dishes. When the top cards on all three dishes show

one or more joint criteria you squeeze the mayonnaise glass as quickly as you can, so that it squeaks. If the cards have one common criterion, you have "A Meal" and name the criterion, e.g. "green shrimp". A better dish is achieved with a "Shrimp Cocktail", but this needs exactly seven shrimp of any color: you call out "Shrimp Cocktail" and

get all cards on the three dishes, as you also do when announcing a meal. If you spot the Super Shrimp Dish you must name two criteria that are identical on all three cards, and name them. This is rewarded with all cards from the dishes and you also steal a total of seven cards from one or several players. Of you make a mistake you must give up one of your collected cards; if you do not have one you give away a card from your stack to any player. When a player is out of cards in his stack you win with most cards collected. But should the "legendary and so awesome meal of the century" happen, that is, three criteria are the same on the three top cards, you instantly win the game if you squeeze the mayonnaise glass first and name the criteria correctly.

Shrimp is a new "Game in a Sack", a fast funny family game training reaction and observation while providing a lot of fun, a marvelous summer game! ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
7+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Roberto Fraga

Artist: Philippe Briones

Price: ca. 15 Euro

Publisher: Asmodee 2012

www.asmodee.de

EVALUATION

Reaction game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en es fr nl
In-game text: no

Comments:

Funny topic * Standard mechanisms * Nice component details * Ideal game for holidays

Compares to:

Jungle Speed, Schnipp Schnapp and other reaction games with image or criteria comparison

Other editions:

Shrimp Cocktail, Blue Orange Games



STAR WARS

BATTLE OF HOTH

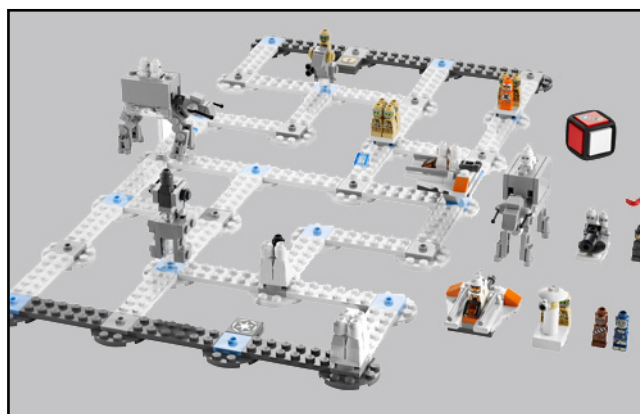


The Imperial forces have discovered the secret base of the Rebels on the ice planet of Hoth and the Battle of Hoth is imminent. Players embody the Empire or Rebels, the Empire starts the game.

Each side has two actions in a turn, attack or movement. For movement action you move one unit one step onto a free

adjacent spot; if you want to do movement twice you must move two different units. In order to attack a unit you attack any opposing unit within range, even across a gap, but not across or over other units. Two attack actions need to be implemented with two different units.

The result of an attack is determined by a roll of the die: If the



result is Red the attacked player must remove one character/pawn from his unit. When the last pawn on an Infantry unit is destroyed, the whole unit is destroyed and is removed from the board. Special units can take one more attack when the last character/pawn has been removed and are removed only after that final hit. A result of Red + Symbols indicates a power hit. A power hit win an Infantry unit that includes Darth Vader or Luke Skywalker destroys the attacked unit immediately. A result of White indicates a failed attack. If you reach the opponent's base or destroy all opposing units you win the game.

It is fascinating who you can enact a realistic simulation of well-known elements with simple means; the game itself is simple and can - as all others in the range - be changed creatively and attractively and according to your own ideas or using suggestions from the rules; it is an ultra-light Cosim with variable board, pawns and die as well as rules. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Price: ca. 35 Euro

Publisher: Lego 2012

www.Lego.de/LegoSpiele

EVALUATION

Dice and placement game
For families

Version: multi

Rules: de en fr it nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

Versions listed * Thrilling, well-known topic * Board, die and components can be changed or expanded

Compares to:

All games featuring the Lego die

Other editions:

Currently none



STORY CUBES VOYAGES

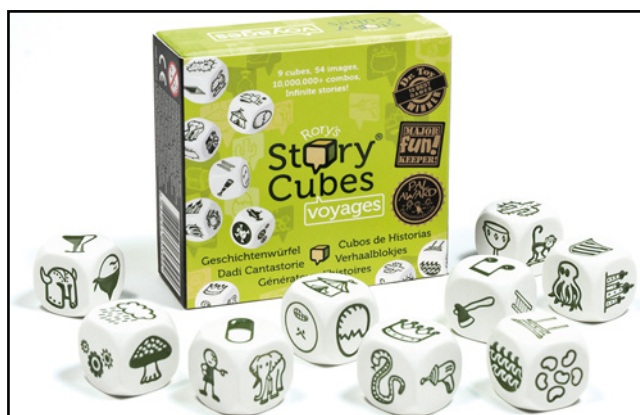
A RAVEN MEETS A CRAB



The attractive little box that can easily be taken along in your pocket holds nine dice. Each of those dice features six different and unique images, abstract or not, that can be interpreted or named in many ways. This gives you 54 images or terms to play with: You roll all nine dice, choose any for the starting die and tell a story. This story must

feature all nine images on the dice; you choose the order in which they appear. You can play alone or in a group; in a group each player tells a story and you vote for the best or each player must continue the story by using one of the cubes.

Voyages, in the green box, is the third edition of the game, featuring nine new dice showing 54



new items. If you own all three editions you can play The Trilogy with three players: You roll all 27 dice and agree on a topic for the story. Then each player tells his part of the story using nine of the cubes. You can also just roll the Voyages dice and let each player use three dice for his part of the story.

There is no limit for your imagination! You can call the flowers a cog wheel or a steering wheel of schooner. And the telescope might be interpreted as a creatively decorated champagne flute, and the small asymmetric blobs are clouds or peanuts or cookies or a wallpaper pattern! The attractive small green box is an ideal travelling companion and invites you on a journey into the land of imagination; if you combine the sets you can even invent wonderful installment stories. Children are challenged and also enchanted by the idea to write down the story and put the cubes onto the page where and when they occur in the story. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1+

AGE:
6+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Rory O'Connor

Artist: not stated

Price: ca. 10 Euro

Publisher: Creativity Hub/Hutter 11

www.huttertrade.de

EVALUATION

Story telling game
For families

Version: multi

Rules: de en es fr it nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

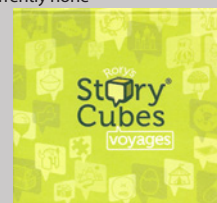
Fantastic game for travelling * Three different editions * Editions can be combined * As good for many players as for one

Compares to:

Story Cubes, Story Cubes Actions, Once upon a Time and other narrative games

Other editions:

Currently none



STRATOPOLIS

EIGHT SQUARES IN THREE LEVELS
FOR A SCORE OF 24!



Stratopolis uses 40 L-shaped pieces that are made from three squares each in combinations of red, green or neutral, plus a starting piece made up of one green plus one red square. In the set of each player the pieces show a maximum of one square in the opposing color. Players alternate to place one of their pieces, aim of the game is to

create the biggest zone of your own color.

You shuffle your pieces and stack them face-up and at random, you must always play the current top piece of the stack. In your turn you can either enlarge the display or stack. To enlarge you place a piece on the table so that it enlarges the display while touching at



least one edge of the display. To stack a piece you place it on top of pieces already laid out, in a way that the new one touches at least two pieces already there and so that color squares only cover squares of the same color or neutral squares. The new piece may not cover gaps and must lay flat on the display in one level. There is no limit to the height of a stack. When all pieces have been placed each player scores the zones of his color. A value of a zone results from its surface area multiplied by the height; the surface area includes all visible squares in the player's color that touch each other along at least one edge. If you own the zone of the highest value you win the game.

The change from wood to plastic has not changed the beauty and the interesting mechanisms of Gigamic's games; Stratopolis offers a bit of tactic even in the core game, the versions offer additional and much more tactical moves, e.g. stacking the pieces according to your choice. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Annick Lobet
Artist: Design France
Price: ca. 22 Euro
Publisher: Gigamic 2012
www.gigamic.com

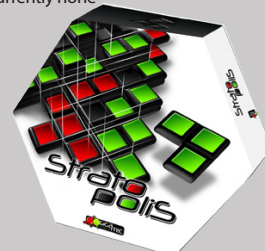
EVALUATION

Abstract placement game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: 21 languages
In-game text: no

Comments:
Elegant and attractive components * Very simple rules * Variants introduce more tactical options

Compares to:
Scho k.o. and other placement games with area formation

Other editions:
Currently none



STÜHLE STAPELN XXL

HA, THE BLUE LEG FITS
THROUGH THE RED BACK!



We have stacked and balanced many things already, lately we stacked watering cans and other implements for the Dragon Knights, and now we again have fun with chairs. Even this is not new, the nice plastic opportunities to sit down have crossed our path already several times and in several editions, this time in an XXL edition.

The game features 24 plastic chairs in three colors, the starting player chooses a chair and puts it in the middle any way he likes; all other players must place the following chairs in a way that they do not touch the table but only chairs. The stack can be extended into any direction as long as it remains stable and does not tumble and as



long as only one chair touches the table. If you cause the stack of chairs to tumble you end the round. The winner of the round is the player who was last to successfully place a chair. You can stop or give out a penalty point for tumbling the stack and play another round. In this case you win when you have the fewest number of penalty points after a pre-set number of rounds.

The interesting thing is that the chairs are different; there are some with straight legs, bent legs, bent backs, straight backs, rounded back ends, holes in the backs, round holes, square holes - which immediately makes you speculate that you could dovetail and thus anchor them. Can I push the next chair leg through a back and stabilize the stack this way? Some players that trial and error do not work, just drop the chair, it will cling somehow! Amusing, funny, more silent than you believe, with furniture more stable than you might think which is more slippery than you want it to be. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
4+

TIME:
10+

Designer: not stated
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 15 Euro
Publisher: Noris Spiele 2012
www.noris-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Stacking game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Stable components * Standard mechanisms * Minimalistic rules

Compares to:
Chairs, Stühle Stapeln

Other editions:
Stühle stapeln, Noris



TABU 6. EDITION

SAUCER WITHOUT DISH, UFO,
FLYING OR HOLDER



For years now Taboo has been used as umbrella term for all games in which you describe items without mentioning so called taboo words; this is the 6th edition of the game with yet another 1000 new terms. This new edition comes, as some of the earlier ones, without a board, and brings a completely new feature, the Taboo Die.

You play in two teams; one player of a team describes a term, the other members of his team must guess. The opposing team checks the adherence to the rules.

The explaining player of the active team draws a card and tries to describe the term without using it, part of it or one of the taboo words. Even parts of

the word and grammatically varied versions are forbidden, as are sounds, gestures, hints on rhymes or similar-sounding words, abbreviations, etc. But you are allowed to sing or use brand and product names or names in general. If you cannot cope with a term you can set aside the card.

Each player at the start of his turn rolls the taboo die for a special rule: Only one player guesses, or both teams guess or you have double the time or you must not move at all while explaining or you play standard Taboo. The main feature is speed: The explainer tries to get across as many terms as possible within the given time - each term that is correctly guessed yields a point. Rules violations and cards that are set aside earn points for the opposing team.

In this 6th edition Taboo again and still is a fantastic game, the terms are current and up to date, ripping does no longer mean tearing apart, but stealing of data; you must think fast and a big vocabulary is a lot of help. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS: 4+ AGE: 16+ TIME: var

Designer: not stated
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 38 Euro
Publisher: Hasbro/Parker 2012
www.hasbro.de

EVALUATION

Definition game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
With taboo die for a special rule per round * Edition without a board * Standard Taboo rules apply

Compares to:
Previous Taboo editions, Tabu XXL, etc..

Other editions:
Taboo, Hasbro USA



THE BIG IDEA

ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLY,
SELF-ADHESIVE TOUPET

Once again, we are more or less crazy inventors and are tasked with making the most crazy and most appreciated inventions. For this we use item cards and description cards and, finally, voting cards to tell what we think of our competition! Voting cards comprise one medal card and number of players minus 2 blank cards, so that you can deal

one voting card to each player but yourself.

Now each player draws three item cards and three description cards and you fill up your hand to this number of cards at the start of round, too. You can also discard all cards and draw new ones. Then you make an invention and use any number of cards from your hand and put

them down face-down. Then each player in turn presents his invention as creatively and effectively as possible and displays the card used for it.

When all inventions of the round are presented, each player gives one voting card to each other player, of course the medal goes to the player whose invention you like best. And of course you do not give yourself a card, because of course all others will love your non-stick self-inflatable chicken! Hopefully! Because you will only be given medals if they do and you need medals because whoever gets the fewest medals of a round, loses this round and takes a „defeat point“ in the shape of one card from his invention. Depending on the number of players you play between four and seven rounds and win with the fewest defeat points.

The cards themselves are not important, you only need to sell your invention convincingly, because all have been waiting a long time for the mechanical ice-lipstick for artists. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS: 3-6 AGE: 13+ TIME: 25+

Designer: James Ernest
Artist: Stéphane Boutin
Price: ca. 18 Euro
Publisher: Funforge 2011
www.funforge.fr

EVALUATION

Card game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en fr
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Objects from daily life are combined into crazy new ones * Not the combination, the presentation is important * Nice party game for creative sales talents

Compares to:
Ein solches Ding and other games featuring silly object

Other editions:
Funforge, France



TICKED OFF

THINGS TO COLOR



Things that people color, kinds of light, rodents - all this sounds rather harmless and simple, but how many can you really name when you are under time pressure?

Players decide on the side of cards they want to play with and then play one or several rounds until one or more players top 50 points. The starting player

draws a card for the category spot and starts bidding, he cannot pass in the first round. With his bid he declares that he can name this number of terms in the category. The next player overbids and or placed his mover on pass. Then bidding continues until one player remains. He will be the first "reader" and starting player for



the next round. Then you draw another card for the mystery spot and all players write down terms for one of the two categories as fast as they can while the timer runs. Then the first reader names his category and reads out his list of words. When other players have listed a word, too, the word is ticked off. Then in turn the others read out words that have not yet been ticked off. Only if the starting player has met his bid he scores two points for each exclusive answer he listed, and one point for each answer surpassing his bid. The other players score one point for each exclusive answer and one point for each answer over the bid of the starting player.

Ticket off offers a nice and cute version of standard mechanisms and a very idiosyncratic rule: If at the end you are in the lead with more than 15 points you are disqualified and the second-best score wins - Scattergories/The Animal with a wink in your eye and very humorously worded rules. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-10

AGE:
13+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Ted Alspach
Artist: Jennifer Vargas
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: R & R Games 2011
www.rnrgames.com

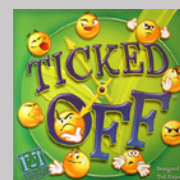
EVALUATION

Vocabulary game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Very curious rule for winning the game * Standard mechanisms nicely varied * Rules cutely worded * Only good for balanced groups

Compares to:
FortyTwo, Kaleidos and other games with listing terms corresponding to topics

Other editions:
Currently none



TOYSTICK

MEINE ERSTE MUSIKSCHULE



The new reading/story-telling/informing pens, which have made their appearance in the range of educational games, are difficult to define: When they are used, as in Die Schatzkammer von El Mirador, as assistant or game master, they are - together with the other components - clearly a game. But the possibilities of those units are manifold

and so the pens can be sorted into the genre educational game due to their assistance for reading, learning and experiencing. Meine erste Musikschule is a very good example for presentation despite being more of a toy than a game. The box without the pen comprises cardboard sheets with parts for a total of 9 musical instruments which can be constructed.



structured. This part of the game trains motor skills and presents basic information on the shape of musical instruments. When the software is downloaded and the game logged in with the pen - you simply press the pen onto the logo - you can now listen to music typical for an instrument simply by touching the instrument with the pen.

When you use the drum kit piece you can listen to rhythmic example, repeat them and try out new rhythms of your own.

The most impressive possibilities are offered by the keyboard - you can play four different instruments on it - piano, guitar, flute (recorder) and bugle (French Horn). By touching the icon for an instrument you activate it and you can hear a note in the sound of the instrument by touching a key on the keyboard; you can compose your own melodies or listen to classic pieces.

This offers an optimum combination of learning and experiencing, not really a game, but definitely an educational game. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1

AGE:
3+

TIME:
var

Designer: not stated
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 18 Euro
Publisher: Noris Spiele 2012
www.noris-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Educational music game
For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
Toystick as musical instrument * Toystick not included in the game * Leading abilities not necessary * Software download for free

Compares to:
Educational systems with similar systems, e.g. tiptoi

Other editions:
Currently none



TWILIGHT IMPERIUM

SHARDS OF THE THRONE



In Twilight Imperium, players are leaders of one of six races; on a variable board diplomacy, planning, force, scientific advances, military force and economic growth are used to steer one's race through the Twilight Times. A round comprises strategy phase, action phase and status phase. In the strategy phase players choose a strategy card.

In the action phase the active player has a strategic action, a tactical action or a transfer action or can pass. Tactical actions include movement, space battles, transport of ground forces, building of new units etc. The complex rules allow different options; the player who brings his marker to position 10 of the victory points score track wins



the game.

The Shards of the Thrones expansion features 14 new systems, new units – flagships and Mechanized Units – as well as four new races - Lazax, The Ghosts of Creuss, The Nekro Virus and The Arborec- as well as new strategy cards and much more. One of the races, the Lazax, can only be used for one scenario - Fall of the Empire. Optional rules and components are Preliminary Objectives, Race-Specific Technologies, Flagships, The Final Frontier Domain Counters, Mechanized Units, Mercenaries, Political Intrigue and The Fall of the Empire Scenario, which features many exceptions to the basic rules.

Twilight Imperium is a fascinating universe, already in its Third Edition, and it is filled even more life and variants by this expansion; up to seven players can now enjoy the manifold intricacies and details of the epic game and experiment with optional rules, which you can add or leave out according to your taste. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-7

AGE:
13+

TIME:
240+

Designer: C. Konieczka, C. Petersen
Artist: Andrew Navaro + Team
Price: ca. 60 Euro
Publisher: Fantasy Flight Games 11
www.hds-fantasy.de

EVALUATION

SciFi development game
For experts
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Very beautiful components
* Scenario for seven players
* Optional rules to add in any combination

Compares to:
Twilight Imperium Core Game, Horus Heresy and other SciFi development games

Other editions:
Currently none



UNO

ROCKING ROBOT

7+

UNO is still THE classic card shedding game; for this universal family companion you can now use the option to personalize the game and to adapt it to your personal preferences by giving it house rules. The clear box contains a cut little robot-shaped unit and features the usual 108 UNO cards plus 4 of House Rule cards for reference or sugges-

tions for house rules.

The robot has four buttons on his belly: Red denotes the recording function, you press it to record the names of the players and your house rule. If you press the green button you repeat the last announcement, with the yellow button you change the sound volume and the blue one is pressed when someone won



the game.

You start with seven cards, the rest is stock pile. Then the robot is switched on, all players record their names and then each player can record a house rule that can have a maximum length of 10 seconds, but you need not record a house rule. Those house rules do not need to refer directly to the game, you can ask for a poem or a performance of the funky chicken dance. The robot calls on a player to start the game, and you play adhering to standard UNO rules; after a player placed a card you press the stacking platform once; in irregular sequence the robot interrupts the game with an action or a house rule: the last player implementing the house rule draws two cards.

Of all UNO versions I have seen so far this is definitely the funniest and at the same time the technologically most refined one. The little robot itself is simply cute and adds its own special flair to a well-known and well-loved classic game. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: M. Robbins, B. Spence
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 27 Euro
Publisher: Mattel 2011
www.mattel.de

EVALUATION

Card shedding game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Witty version * Sophisticated technology * Offers lots of additional fun and surprising about-turns

Compares to:
All other editions of UNO

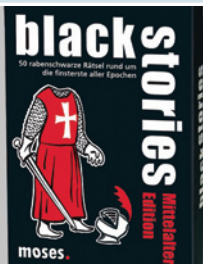
Other editions:
UNO Roboto, Mattel USA



BLACK STORIES MITTELALTER EDITION

Publisher: Moses. Verlag

Designer: Corinna Harder, Jens Schumacher



The story teller is called the monarch; he reads the story on the front of the card. The other players are his people and may pose any questions, but in a form that can be answered with yes or no. The monarch can give hints or deviate players from totally wrong assumptions. The answer on the back of the card is the only correct and acceptable solution.

The Middle Ages Editions introduces 50 new puzzles set in the darkest of all eras.

Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: yes

Deduction and narration game for 2 or more players, ages 12+

CARCASSONNE MINI 3 DIE FÄHREN

Publisher: Hans im Glück

Designer: Klaus-Jürgen Wrede



The mini expansion Die Fahren features 8 landscape tiles with a lake and 8 wooden ferry pieces as well as a card for the Expansion Kornkreise. If you place a landscape tile you may place a follower on one road end. Then you must take a ferry and connect two road ends on the tile; a road end without ferry completes one end of a road. If you extend a road with ferry in it you may relocate the first ferry along the road. The Ferry actions in order, when applicable: Place tile or lake tile, place follower, place ferry, relocate ferry, score.

Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: no

Mini-Expansion for Carcassonne for 2-5 players, ages 10+

CHUGGINGTON SICHER MIT DEM FAHRRAAD

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele



Based on the concept of Happy Families and accompanied by an information brochure this educational topic focuses on „Traffic situations when using a bicycle“. The 28 cards feature 7 different situations. Rules for behavior in certain traffic situations are explained and pictured, the brochure allows checking up and contains tips for explaining, training and avoiding dangerous situations. Part of a series of educational games on traffic topics, featuring images from the Chuggington series!

Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: some

Educational game for 3-4 players, ages 4+

DER HERR DER RINGE DIE RÜCKKEHR ZUM DÜSTERWALD

Publisher: Heidelberger

Designer: Nate French



Schatten des Dürsterwalds Die Rückkehr zum Dürsterwald / Shadows of Mirkwood Return to Mirkwood is the 6th Adventure Pack = AP for the LCG Der Herr der Ringe Das Kartenspiel / The Lord of the Rings The Card Game, featuring 60 cards. Cards and their ratio are the same in each pack, without chance distribution and varying rarity. "Return to Mirkwood" has difficulty level 7; cards come from the AP and the Core Set Encounter Sets "Spinnen des Dürsterwalds" and "Wilderland". One player is guarding Gollum effects in the encounter and adventure decks and on Gollum interact with the guardian. If Gollum is eliminated or leaves the game all have lost.

Version: de * Rules: de en fr pl * In-game text: yes

Expansion for the card game for 1-2 players, ages 13+

FILLY ELVES MEMO

Publisher: Noris



The Filly Unicorns and the Filly Fairies are now joined by the Filly Elves, 42 of those pretty little ponies frolic on the tiles; two identical ones form a pair and all show the typical pointed ears that are said to be typical for elves. You play according to the rules for a standard memo game: You turn up two cards from the random display on the table. If you uncover a pair, you keep it and have another turn. If you uncover different images, both are turned over again.

Version: multi * Rules: de en fr it nl pl * In-game text: no

Memo game based on the license topic, for 2-4 players, ages 3+

JUNGLE SPEED BIG BOX

Publisher: Asmodee

Designer: Thomas Vuarchex, Pierrick Yakovenko



Cards show similar symbols in different colors. You have a stack of face-down cards and players take turns to turn up the top card of the stack. If two identical symbols are visible, both players with the symbol on their stack grab the totem as soon as possible. When a card "all take hold" appears, all players try to get the totem. The player who successfully takes hold of it always places his stack under the totem. If you turn up your last card, you win.

Big Box with 120 cards

Version: multi * Rules: de en * In-game text: no

Observation and reaction game for 2-15 players, ages 7+

KLEINER OBSTGARTEN

Publisher: Haba

Designer: Anneliese Farkaschovsky



Harvest time in the orchard. Cherries, apples, pears and plums need to be picked, before the thieving raven reaches its nest. The trees are filled with fruit and the raven sits on the ladder spot on the board. You roll the die and if you roll a color to take a piece of fruit in this color or - should none be left - any piece of fruit. When you roll the raven moves to the next tree and steals a piece of fruit there. When all fruits have been harvested before the raven reaches its nest all players have won together.

Version: multi * Rules: de en es fr it nl * In-game text: no

Cooperative dice game for 1-4 players, ages 3-6

PFERDEFREUNDE WETTLAUF AUF DER WEIDE

Publisher: Coppenrath Die Spiegelburg

Designer: Inka und Markus Brand



In your turn you roll all six dice and compare the results with the image on the spot next to your own tile on the board. If a die corresponds to the image you place the die there and check the next spot. When you have placed all corresponding dice you can stop and place your tile on the furthest spot with a die, or you can roll the remaining dice. If you re-roll you must be able to place a die afterwards or you must remove all your dice from the track and have made no progress in this turn. If you are first to reach the finish with your tile you win.

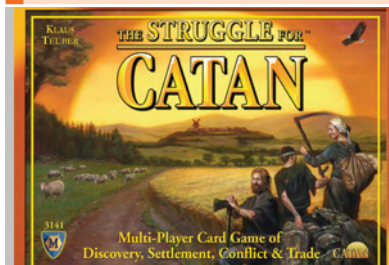
Version: multi * Rules: de en es fr it nl * In-game text: no

Roll & move game for 2-4 players, ages 6+

THE STRUGGLE FOR CATAN

Publisher: Mayfair Games

Designer: Klaus Teuber



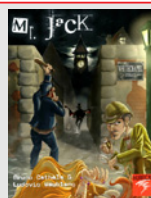
A card game based on Catan; you build settlements, cities, city extensions and roads and buy knights, all placed in your display. In your turn you can exchange resources card, build building cards and draw resources cards. For building costs you discard resources cards from your hand. If you build a knight or road and the stack is empty you take the card from your next neighbor in the direction indicated by the Fate Card. If you own 10 victory points in your turn, you win. US Edition of Die Siedler von Catan Das schnelle Kartenspiel

Version: en * Rules: de en * In-game text: yes

Card game based on Settlers of Catan for 2-4 players, ages 8+

HUGO KASTNER RECOMMENDS

MR. JACK

WHITECHAPEL AT THE CRACK OF DAWN

Dear reader! Mr. Jack! The name commemorates the presumptive serial killer Jack the Ripper, who murdered five prostitutes in the East End of London in 1888 and brutally mutilated them. Legends have ranked themselves around the identity of this slaughterer who could never be unmasked.

Conspiracy theories have flowered and popular attempts at explanations are still voiced today, more than one hundred and thirty years after the murders. Films, books, comics, games - all genres of art have picked up the topic of Jack the Ripper. And the excellent, asymmetric deduction by Bruno Cathala and Ludovic Maublanc integrates itself nearly seamlessly into the fascination with this crime. But this is not all, "Mr. Jack" was an "instant success" and the publisher nearly as instantly decided to follow up this success with an expansion featuring new characters. This was a laudable decision in this case, because this makes the eternal hunt for the Ripper even more challenging and diverse. Another two years later, "Mr. Jack in New York" was published; a sprout with an atypical topic, but even more challenging in its demand for tactical comprehension and providing a rise of nearly 50% in the chances of Mr. Jack to evade his pursuers. The hymns of praise from the reviewers once again confirm the creative potential of this designer team. In 2010 a pocket version of the game was published, which surprisingly provided a high degree of individuality, a lot of flair and top components. Furthermore, "Mr. Jack Pocket" offers an easy entry into the tight "Whitechapel at the crack of dawn". You want to join into this hunt for the culprit? Then get yourself to the Österreichisches Spiele Museum.

Website: www.spielen.at

Our lamp illuminates a bleak and gloomy corner of London's East End: Whitechapel. It is populated by eight characters, and of them embodies Evil. His name: Mr. Jack. But this criminal is very cunningly hid-

ing among the other characters, some of whom represent liminary or historically verified personalities: Sherlock Holmes, John H. Watson, John Smith, Police Inspector Lestrade, Miss Stealthy, Sergeant Goodley, Sir William Gull and Jeremy Bert. Each of those characters has very special abilities and those abilities can be adroitly used by both the Inspector and the Miscreant. Aim of the pursuer is to detain Mr. Jack before the end of eight rounds of the game, and the hope of the culprit contrarily is, the escape his pursuer in the narrow maze of Whitechapel's lanes. Round for round Mr. Jack must leave hints for the Inspector and round for round the list of suspects gets shorter. The net tightens slowly, but at the same time more and more of the gas lights go out - and maybe the escape from Whitechapel succeeds at the crack of dawn, provided Mr. Jack was not spotted in the previous round by any of the witnesses and so was able to successfully escape the sallow shine of the street lights. The hut is over in less than half an hour and, regardless of who ended this cat-and-mouse-play, the wish for a return game with switched roles is unavoidable. Allow me to cite one experience from countless hunts in Whitechapel: The role of Mr. Jack is the more difficult one, especially in the core game, albeit accompanied rubbing your hands with glee when you manage to lead the Inspector a merry dance. This is partly possible due to adroit directing of the characters into the light of the street lamps, partly also due to bluffing, for instance with intentional placing a main suspect into the background. The Inspector is forced to react, loses a lot of time and in the end must stand by helplessly watching Jack taking flight. The fate of the real Jack the Ripper is repeated on the board. Case unsolved! ☑

Comments to: Hugo.Kastner@spielen.at
Homepage: www.hugo-kastner.at

TIP #79

Designer: Cathala, Maublanc

Price: ca. 25 Euros

Jahr: 2006

Publisher: Hurrican

www.asmodee.de

PLAYERS:

2

AGE:

9+

TIME:

30+

Tactic Info± Chance

In this hunt for the culprit information is only handed over to the Inspector in tiny portions and with a bit of luck too late so that he cannot avert the escape of Mr. Jack. All the same, you need a good amount of tactical abilities, especially in the New York edition, if you want to make optimum use of the board.

Hugos EXPERT TIP

For an introduction into the game you should start with the pocket edition or the core edition of "Mr. Jack". In these games the tactical possibilities are not as manifold as on the New York board. Furthermore, I recommend analyzing the eight characters you will use very carefully and closely before you start the game.

Hugos FLASHLIGHT

During the game it gets gloomier and gloomier in Whitechapel, as the scarce street lights fade out one by one in the notorious district. Should no witness present itself, Jack the Ripper can grab the moment to escape. Excellent components, a richly illustrated rules booklet, laid-back artwork, a high arc of suspense and lots of different scenarios, Mr. Jack is really a hit for two players! What more can you expect?

VORANKÜNDIGUNG:**ORBIT**

Circling a Black Hole

**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, Österreich, Telefon 02216-7000, mail-to: office@spielen.at, Internet: www.spielejournal.at - 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 nicht namentlich gekennzeichneten Rezensionen zu den Spielen sind von Dagmar de Cassan) English Edition Version 1.0

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ÖFFENTLICHES MEDIUM
Dieses Medium liest der
»OBSERVER«
Österreichs größter Medienbeobachter
Tel.: (01) 213 22 0

Icon explanation



Solo Play



Two Players



Large Groups



Recommended Minimum Age

GABIS explanation on page 5

Emely & Lukas Brand

Zebra-Schwein

Ein sau-komisches Zeichenspiel



Mit grunzendem 3D-Schwein

Grunz!
Grunz!

