

board game jam dice

a board game design tool by: SIMON GEORGE

OVERVIEW

Board Game Jam Dice are a creative tool for game designers to aid in the ideation and development of tabletop games during game jams.

Rolling the dice generates one of 46,656 different unique combinations - which the designer can use as inspiration for a brainstorming session.

COMPONENTS

It's a set of six, unique dice! Each dice has a theme, each with six unique faces. The themes are:

- Category
- Game Type
- Mechanism
- Feature
- Atmosphere
- Setting



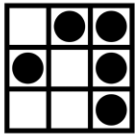


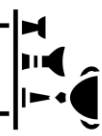
HOW TO USE

Simply take all six dice, roll them simultaneously and write down the combination shown on the face-up faces. Repeat this three times; then, for each one, try to think up ideas for a board game design or concept which might fulfil all six categories.



Once you have spent a few minutes on each, choose the idea that you most prefer and try to develop it into a fully-fledged board game. If it doesn't work out or you'd like some additional options, feel free to roll the dice again to come up with a new idea - it's up to you!

PRINT 'N' PLAY DICE NETS (1)

(1) Category





| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
|  AREA CONTROL |  COOPERATIVE |  COLLECTION |  VICTORY POINTS |
|---|--|--|---|

RACE

PEN & PAPER

(3) Format





| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
|  TILE-LAYING |  PARTY |  EUROGAME |  CARD-DRIVEN |
|---|---|--|--|

ROLE-PLAYING





PROGRAMMING

(3) Mechanism

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
|  AUCTION |  BLUFFING |  DRAFTING |  WORKER PLACEMENT |
|--|---|--|---|





ENGINE-BUILDING




Assembly: Cut out each net and fold along each line. Apply glue to each grey flap, then stick each flap inside to create a cube. Then roll to your heart's content!

PRINT 'N' PLAY DICE NETS (2)

(4) Feature





| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  DEDUCTION |  DICE-ROLLING |  ELIMINATION |  PUZZLE |
|--|---|---|---|

HEX / GRID



INTRIGUE

(5) Atmosphere





| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  WAR |  HORROR |  CONSTRUCTION |  ADVENTURE |
|---|--|--|--|

TRAVEL



MUNICIPAL

(6) Setting

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
|  CRIMINAL |  ENVIRONMENTAL |  FUTURISTIC |  MYTHOLOGICAL |
|---|--|--|---|

HISTORICAL





Assembly: Cut out each net and fold along each line. Apply glue to each grey flap, then stick each flap inside to create a cube. Then roll to your heart's content!

FAQS

Q: Do I have to design a game that meets all of the categories?

A: Of course not! It's entirely up to you - it is simply a starting point from which ideas can flow. Equally, you can feel free to add other mechanisms or themes if you so wish. Don't let the dice constrain you!

Q: I don't have access to a printer. What can I do instead?

A: Well, if you have some regular six-sided dice, then you're halfway there! Simply allocate each dice to a specific theme [*Category, Game Type, Mechanism, etc.*] - then, when you roll each one, use the glossary pages to look up the relevant result (where the uppermost entry on each page is a  and the lowermost entry on each page is a ).

If, instead, you have a copy of [Tabletop Simulator](#) then you can download a Steam Workshop mod for BGJD here:

<https://steamcommunity.com/sharedfiles/filedetails/?id=2914346381>

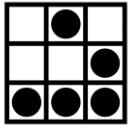


BGJD mod for Tabletop Simulator

Q: I'm not sure what some of these terms mean. How can I find out?

A: Some helpful definitions may be found on the following glossary pages, separated by theme. These definitions also provide some examples of existing board games which feature those characteristics, and which may serve as inspiration for your design. However, feel free to interpret things however you like!

DEFINITIONS (1) CATEGORY



AREA CONTROL

Players typically compete over a map (or other space), aiming to dominate regions or areas by adding their own pieces or by removing those of opponent(s).

Examples: Small World (Philippe Keyaerts, 2009), Discworld: Ankh-Morpork (Martin Wallace, 2011), Spirit Island (R. Eric Reuss, 2017),



COLLECTION

Points are awarded for collecting "sets" of Things; usually, more points for more Things.

Examples: Lost Cities (Reiner Knizia, 1999), Coloretto (Michael Schacht, 2003), Thurn and Taxis (Andreas & Karen Seyfarth, 2006)



COOPERATIVE

Instead of competing with each other for victory, players work together; either sharing victory or sharing defeat as a group.

Examples: Pandemic (Matt Leacock, 2008), Hanabi (Antoine Bauza, 2010), Gloomhaven (Isaac Childres, 2017)



RACE

The primary victory mechanism is to be the first past a "finish-line"; either on a physical track, to achieve a target, or to a set number of points.

Examples: Steampunk Rally (Orin Bishop, 2015), Scythe (Jamey Stegmaier, 2016), The Quest for El Dorado (Reiner Knizia, 2017)



VERSUS

The game is formed of two, opposing sides: either as a two-player game, or groups of players in two teams.

Examples: Jaipur (Sébastien Pauchon, 2009), Codenames (Vlaada Chvátil, 2015), Santorini (Gord!, 2016)



VICTORY POINTS

Players earn points for completing actions or fulfilling objectives, and the player with the most points at the end of the game is the winner.

Examples: Puerto Rico (Andreas Seyfarth, 2002), Alhambra (Dirk Henn, 2003), Ticket to Ride (Alan R. Moon, 2004)

DEFINITIONS (2) GAME TYPE

Any game in which a primary method that players engage in play is through the medium of activating, collecting or exchanging cards.

Examples: Magic: The Gathering (Richard Garfield, 1993), Rhino Hero (Scott Frisco & Steven Strumpf, 2011), The 7th Continent (Ludovic Roudy & Bruno Sautter, 2017),



CARD-DRIVEN

Usually a game where you have a bunch of wooden cubes, and the majority of the game is focused on getting, spending and moving those cubes in order to score points.

Examples: Catan (Klaus Teuber, 1995), Caylus (William Attia, 2005), Imperial Settlers (Ignacy Trzewiczek, 2014)



EUROGAME

A wide variety of games which are family-friendly or suitable for large groups; often promoting "fun" over pure strategy.

Examples: Apples to Apples (Matthew Kirby & Mark Alan Osterhaus, 1999), Dixit (Jean-Louis Roubira, 2008), Happy Salmon (Ken Gruhl & Quentin Weir, 2016)



PARTY

A significant portion of the game, or the entirety of it, is played using paper and writing implements: drawing, marking off things or taking notes/journaling.

Examples: Pictionary (Rob Angel, 1985), Qwixx (Steffen Benndorf, 2012), Cartographers (Jordy Adan, 2019)



PEN & PAPER

A game in which players are encouraged to immerse themselves into the role of a character (or characters) in order to increase enjoyment and/or drive narrative.

Examples: Betrayal at House on the Hill (Bruce Glassco et al., 2004), Shadows over Camelot (Bruno Cathala & Serge Laget, 2005), Mice and Mystics (Jerry Hawthorne, 2012)



ROLE-PLAYING

A game driven by the placement of cardboard tiles onto the playing area, often such that the "board" grows over the course of the game.

Examples: Carcassonne (Klaus-Jürgen Wrede, 2000), Terraforming Mars (Jacob Fryxellius, 2016), Azul (Michael Kiesling, 2017)



TILE-LAYING

DEFINITIONS (3) MECHANISM



AUCTION

Mechanisms where players openly or blindly bid for resources or actions in some way, either using currency or other resources themselves.

Examples: Ra (Reiner Knizia, 1999), For Sale (Stefan Dorra, 1997), Power Grid (Friedemann Friese, 2004)



BLUFFING

Players are allowed, encouraged or mandated (in the case of "traitor"-style games) to deceive other players in order to further their own means.

Examples: Cockroach Poker (Jacques Zeimet, 2004), The Resistance (Don Eskridge, 2009), Sheriff of Nottingham (Sérgio Halaban, André Zatz, 2014)



DRAFTING

Each turn, players are given a selection of Things, from which they pick one and then pass the rest on to another player; often, until all of the Things have been taken.

Examples: Citadels (Bruno Faidutti, 2000), 7 Wonders (Antoine Bauza, 2010), Sushi Go! (Phil Walker-Harding, 2013)



ENGINE-BUILDING

A mechanism whereby players gradually construct a system which, as it grows over the course of the game, grants even more resources, points and/or actions per turn.

Examples: Race for the Galaxy (Thomas Lehmann, 2007), Dominion (Donald X. Vaccarino, 2008), Splendor (Marc André, 2014)



PROGRAMMING

Players must pre-select and plan a sequence of actions (usually simultaneously and hidden from each other), then execute them in the same order - for good or bad.

Examples: RoboRally (Richard Garfield, 1994), Colt Express (Christophe Raimbault, 2014), Flamme Rouge (Asger Harding Granerud, 2016)



WORKER PLACEMENT

An action selection mechanism where players place tokens on spaces to perform unique actions, often blocking the space from being used by other players on that turn.

Examples: Agricola (Uwe Rosenberg, 2007), Lords of Waterdeep (Peter Lee & Rodney Thompson, 2012), Mint Works (Justin Blaske, 2017)

DEFINITIONS (4) FEATURE

Players attempt to determine (initially) hidden information based upon clues that they are provided by the game, other players, or inferred through play.

Examples: Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective (Gary Grady et al., 1982), A Fake Artist Goes to New York (Jun Sasaki, 2011), Spyfall (Alexandr Ushan, 2014)

Any game where some element of the play is dictated by the rolling of a die (or dice), or where there is an element of randomness involved.

Examples: King of Tokyo (Richard Garfield, 2011), Camel Up (Steffen Bogen, 2014), Ganz Schön Clever (Wolfgang Warsch, 2018)

Players may be knocked out of or removed from the game as it proceeds, with the game continuing until there is (usually) only one victor.

Examples: Loopin' Louie (Masaru Aoki & Carol Wiseley, 1992), Cash 'N Guns (Ludovic Maublanc, 2005), Love Letter (Seiji Kanai, 2012)

The board, or tiles, feature hexagon-sized spaces or the game otherwise involves a hexagonal grid somewhere in its design.

Examples: The Castles of Burgundy (Stefan Feld, 2011), Takenoko (Antoine Bauza, 2011), Terra Mystica (Jens Drögemüller & Helge Ostertag, 2012)

Mechanisms where a player is invited to repeat an action over and over for greater reward but which, with each successive action, there is a risk of a bad consequence.

Examples: Can't Stop (Sid Sackson, 1980), Incan Gold (Bruno Faidutti & Alan R. Moon, 2005), Zombie Dice (Steve Jackson, 2010)

Instances where players are trying to solve a puzzle or find a solution using themes such as: problem-solving, pattern recognition, code-cracking or optimisation.

Examples: Ricochet Robots (Alex Randolph, 1999), Patchwork (Uwe Rosenberg, 2014), EXIT: The Game (Inka & Markus Brand, 2016),



DEDUCTION



DICE-ROLLING



ELIMINATION



HEX / GRID



PUSH YOUR
LUCK



PUZZLE

DEFINITIONS (5) ATMOSPHERE



ADVENTURE

The overall game oozes themes of exploration, excitement or derring-do.

Examples: Tales of the Arabian Nights (Eric Goldberg, 1985), Dungeon Roll (Chris Darden, 2013), Forbidden Desert (Matt Leacock, 2013)



CONSTRUCTION

Players will be assembling things or engaging in play which retains an overall atmosphere of construction.

Examples: Blueprints (Yves Tourigny, 2013), Dinosaur Island (Jonathan Gilmour & Brian Lewis, 2017), Welcome To... (Benoit Turpin, 2018)



HORROR

The theme or game mechanics are typified by things which are spooky, scary or creepy.

Examples: Mansions of Madness (Corey Konieczka, 2011), Mysterium (Oleksandr Nevskiy & Oleg Sidorenko, 2015), Escape the Dark Castle (Alex Crispin et al., 2017)



INTRIGUE

The game contains themes of trickery or secrecy such that there is hidden information, scheming or a lack of trust between players.

Examples: Battlestar Galactica: The Board Game (Corey Konieczka, 2008), Libertalia (Paolo Mori, 2012), Coup (Rikki Tahta, 2012)



TRAVEL

A theme or set of game mechanics which circulates around motion, navigation or globe-trotting.

Examples: Tokaido (Antoine Bauza, 2012), Great Western Trail (Alexander Pfister, 2016), On Tour (Chad DeShon, 2019)



WAR

An atmosphere which revolves around warfare in some way, although not necessarily combat itself.

Examples: Memoir '44 (Richard Borg, 2004), Twilight Struggle (Ananda Gupta & Jason Matthews, 2005), The Grizzled (Fabien Riffaud & Juan Rodriguez, 2015)

DEFINITIONS (6) SETTING

An overall atmosphere of law and order involving committing, halting or solving crime in some way.

Examples: Mafia de Cuba (Philippe des Pallières & Loïc Lamy, 2015), Burgle Bros. (Tim Fowers, 2015), Chronicles of Crime (David Cicurel, 2018)

A setting within the natural world echoing biology, climate or flora & fauna.

Examples: Evolution (Dominic Crapuchettes et al., 2014), Photosynthesis (Hjalmar Hach, 2017), Wingspan (Elizabeth Hargrave, 2019)

The game has a setting somewhere in humanity's future or science fiction.

Examples: Risk 2210 A.D. (Rob Daviau & Chris Dupuis, 2011), T.I.M.E. Stories (Peggy Chassenet & Manuel Rozoy, 2015), The Crew: The Quest for Planet Nine (Thomas Sing, 2019)

The game has a setting somewhere in humanity's past or cultural history.

Examples: Brass: Lancashire (Martin Wallace, 2007), Tzolk'in: The Mayan Calendar (Simone Luciani & Daniele Tascini, 2012), The Manhattan Project (Brandon Tibbetts, 2012)

A setting which involves civic or urban issues such as transport, housing, emergency services or commerce.

Examples: Flash Point: Fire Rescue (Kevin Lanzing, 2011), Suburbia (Ted Alspach, 2012), Food Chain Magnate (Jeroen Doumen & Joris Wiersinga, 2015)

A fictional and/or magical setting which touches on mythology, folklore or fantasy.

Examples: Ghost Stories (Antoine Bauza, 2008), Cyclades (Bruno Cathala & Ludovic Maublanc, 2009), Spirit Island (R. Eric Reuss, 2017)



CRIMINAL



ENVIRONMENTAL



FUTURISTIC



HISTORICAL



MUNICIPAL



MYTHOLOGICAL

CREDITS

Designed by Simon George ([zinar7](#)) [2023], taking heavy inspiration from Atomic Shrimp's [Invention Dice](#).

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Categories and definitions created with help from the following websites:

- [BoardGameGeek](#)
- [Game Night Gods](#)
- [Dicebreaker](#)
- [Tabletop Bellhop](#)

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7th
ALCHEMY