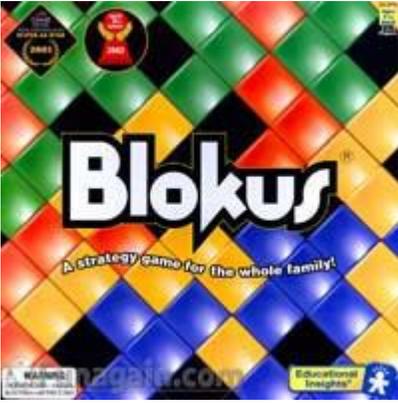


Blokus



MENSA
Best Mind Game 2003



Spiel Des Jahres
Nominee 2002

Store: [Editor's Pick Family Games Games](#) | [Family Games](#) | [Kids Games](#)

Series: [Blokus](#)

Genre: [Abstract Strategy](#)

Format: [Board Games](#)

Edition: [Blokus](#)

Other: [2006 Board Game Geek Gift Guide](#) | [Gifts for new gamers](#) | [Games for Non-gamers](#) | [Gifts for your family](#) | [Games for older children](#) | [Funagain Recommended Games](#)

Designer(s): [Bernard Tavitian](#)

Manufacturer(s): [Educational Insights](#)

Year: 2003

Players: 2 - 4

Time: 20 - 30 minutes

Ages: 5 and up

Est. time to learn: Under 5 minutes

Not only is Blokus one of the most beautiful games to be found, it is also a tremendous two to four player strategy game. There are literally only two rules, allowing the game to be accessible to even the most casual of players; and games can end in ten minutes! Players take turns laying down twenty-one pieces of different shapes on a grid, attempting to block their opponents and make more room for themselves. The player who places the most translucent plastic pieces is the winner, as players seek to expand their own territory in this clever little game.

Image Gallery:



Contents:

- 1 board of 400 squares
- 84 pieces in 4 colors
- Instruction Guide

Editorial Reviews:

Mark Engelberg

Blokus is an excellent spatial game for the whole family. I say "for the whole family" because the game is substantially

BLOKUS

more interesting for adults than most kids' games. The game is completely abstract, with no theme, but with its colorful geometric pieces, most kids won't mind at all.

Each player begins the game with an assortment of geometric shapes. One player has all the red shapes, one has all the green shapes, etc. Players take turns deploying pieces to a grid-board in such a way that the piece touches a same-colored piece at one or more corners, but not along any edge. Once the board is mostly filled and no one can make a legal play, the game ends and the person whose remaining pieces have the smallest total area wins.

Although this summary may be a bit tricky to follow without the illustrations, the rules are actually extraordinarily simple. If your child understands what it means for two shapes to touch at a corner, and to touch along an edge, then your child will be able to grasp this game.

This game offers ample opportunity for kids to learn and exercise strategic and tactical thinking skills.

The game's biggest drawback is that it is really optimal with exactly four players. You can play with two players by doubling up colors, or with three players by using a neutral color, but these solutions aren't terribly satisfactory.

A couple of other things to be aware of before choosing this game: First, the pieces rest fairly shallowly in the board; clumsy kids may find themselves knocking the pieces out of their locations all too easily. Second, the number of available options dwindles dramatically in the second half of the game, so young players may need assistance in locating the few available legal moves.

GAMES Magazine Reviews:

John McCallion

Jan 01, 2004

Congratulations to Educational Insights for publishing this colorful game (included in last year's Games 100 as an import). Your 21 colored pieces show all the ways in which one to five squares can be orthogonally joined. Use one piece to cover a corner square of the 20x20 board on your first turn. Thereafter, you may only place pieces that touch at least one of your other pieces--but only at corners! Only opposing pieces can meet at edges. Pass if unable to play. The game ends when everyone is blocked. Win by having unplayed pieces covering the smallest total area. The solitaire puzzle option is excellent practice for competitive play.

John McCallion

Jan 01, 2003

Twenty-one pieces in your color represent all the ways in which one to five squares can be joined orthogonally. On your first turn, lay a piece to cover a corner square of the 20 x 20 board. On subsequent turns, place a piece to touch at least at an edge. Anyone unable to play passes. Play ends when everyone is blocked, and the player with the fewest squared in unplayed pieces wins. Whether you tackle the vexing solitaire puzzle or get involved in the deep territorial intrigues of competitive play, you'll find this simple and colorful game addictively fascinating. Fans of this game can join the Blokus Federation at www.blokus.com.

Counter Magazine Reviews:

Ben Baldanza

Jun 01, 2002

Blokus is an in-your-face, territory domination game in abstract format. It is a highly interactive contest that is best with four players and with its fast play and good replay ability it is one of the more interesting, if lesser known, new games around. Part of its obscurity may be its French origin and the fact that few comments have been made about it in most of the normal German game sources.

The board is a raised plastic square with slightly raised gridlines. Each player receives an identical set of 21 pieces, with sizes from one to five grid-size squares in unique orientations. Each player's goal is to place as many pieces as they can on the board, with minus points assigned at the end equal to the total number of squares not placed. So, if I

BLOKUS

am left with a 5-square piece, a 3-square piece and a 2-square piece, I score negative 10 points.

The key, of course, is how the pieces are placed. The first piece must be placed in a corner of the board and each piece from then on must touch only the corners of any piece previously placed. This typically results in a fast race to the middle of the board in order to leave many expansion options open. On any given turn, there are obviously two choices to be made: which piece to place and where to place it. These decisions can be made to quickly place an unusually shaped piece that will be difficult to fit in later, to perfectly squeeze in a piece that has been left open by other placements, to create an outlet for more pieces by opening a new area of the board with a placement, or to play the right size piece to cut off an opponent's growth. In practicality, the best moves do several of these at once and the player that can see the board and its development best, along with good sequencing of their pieces, will prove victorious.

Within this straightforward process, amazingly intricate patterns develop and the choices for attack versus defense reveal themselves quickly. It is necessary to leave options open for growth, lest you be cut off without the right piece left to open up a new area of the board. It is especially satisfying to find a key placement that extends a seemingly dead-end link; of course, finding those spots for your opponent is also key. If you manage to place all of your pieces, you score a 15-point bonus and that is raised to 20 if you manage to place the one, single-square piece as your final play. These bonuses only make sense in the context of multiple games, obviously, since the only other scores are negative and thus zero would be an easy winner in a single game.

The pieces in Blokus are nicely colored plastic that are hearty enough for normal play, but will certainly break or crack if stepped on accidentally. The game comes packaged with rules in four languages, a trend that is nicely becoming more common especially with non-German European producers. There is a nice implementation of the game online at www.blokus.com, and it is worth trying the game here before buying a physical copy to see if this is your cup of tea. The physical game is worth owning, though, as it will appeal to gamers and non-gamers alike and provides a refreshing and interesting play in a short period of time.

Customer Reviews:



Average rating: 4.5 in 29 reviews.



One of the best games EVER.

Jacqueline H.

Apr 08, 2007

We LOVE Blokus. It takes literally ten seconds to learn how to play, but the game itself is sophisticated and elegant, and you never get tired of playing. Each player gets 21 pieces of their own color that are comprised of from one to five squares attached together in various configurations - sort of like Tetris pieces. All you have to do is put down pieces of your color, touching other pieces at the corners. Your pieces cannot touch your pieces of the same color on any side. The goal is to unload all of your pieces. The person with the fewest number of squares left at the end of the game wins. That's it. As the board fills up, it becomes increasingly difficult to place your pieces, and you have to place pieces both defensively and "offensively" in order to be a really good strategic player.

Children as young as three can participate and play without strategy - they'll still enjoy it. If you put the pieces into plastic ziploc bags, it's extremely packable for traveling because the board, while about a foot square and not foldable, is flat, so it fits nicely into a suitcase (although not into, say, a backpack). The one drawback of this game is that it really works by far the best if it is played by four people exactly. More than four cannot play (except on teams). Fewer than four is cumbersome because all four colors MUST be played at each game. In games with three players, each player must take turns playing the fourth un-manned color. In games with two players, each player plays two colors, but this shifts the focus to protecting your own color pieces, which thwarts interesting play. Oddly, you CAN play Blokus solitaire, trying to get all the pieces of all colors "legally" on the board, which is really challenging and fun. It's a great game for two couples to play, or four friends. We've actually started having Blokus parties. Even people who don't like games like Blokus.

It's not hard to convince people to learn it because it's so easy to learn, and you don't have to play too seriously if you don't want to. The board is beautiful, too. I completely recommend it.

BLOKUS



I love this game!

Jennifer Distad

Apr 06, 2006

This is a fun, compelling game. Recently, I introduced this to some friends. As soon as we had finished our first game, the board was cleared for round two.

As everyone was intent over their pieces and the constantly growing terrain, random comments of appreciation for Blokus kept surfacing like, "I love the satisfying click you get when you put a piece on the board."

The components are top quality. The board does not fold down (presumably to avoid the disruption of hinges), so the box takes up a bit of space on the game shelf. But, it's sturdy plastic, and the pieces are also sturdy plastic, in attractive translucent colors.

The gameplay is simple to teach, and can be learned in about 1 minute. The outcome, however, is different every time.

The game plays well with two or four players. I have not tried the three player variant yet, but am skeptical that it would play as well (think "neutral army" in two-player [Risk](#)).

If you're not sure if this game is up your alley, you can always try it online first at blokus.com.

Again, I highly recommend this game! If you already have and enjoy Blokus, consider [Tantrix](#)--another spatially challenging game.



Blokus is for Everyone!

Bryan Munson

Feb 03, 2006

I am going to let my 11-year-old son review this game so we can get a younger perspective on it:

"I think this game is a good game for kids. Even kids that are in kindergarten. It's a game that can be played over and over and you never get tired of it because it teaches you how to use a grid, and it is a very good strategy game. What I like best about it is, it is not that hard to put together and it doesn't take that long to play. It's AWESOME! It has to be on your game shelf."

I couldn't agree more. Blokus is a sure-fire family favorite.