Ingenious

GAMES Magazine
Abstract Strategy Game Nominee 2006

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MENSA
Best Mind Game 2005

**Deutscher SpielePreis
5th Place 2004**

**International Gamers Awards
Best Strategy Game Nominee 2004**

**Spiel Des Jahres
Nominee 2004**
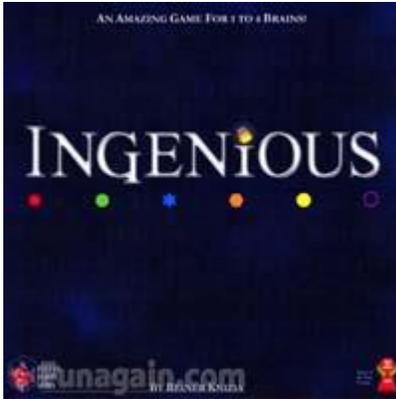
Store: Editor's Pick Family Games Games | Strategy Games
Genre: Abstract Strategy
Format: Board Games
Edition: Einfach Genial/Ingenious/Mensa Connections
Other: 2006 Board Game Geek Gift Guide

Designer(s): Reiner Knizia
Manufacturer(s): Sophisticated Games, Fantasy Flight Games
Year: 2005
Players: **1 - 4**
Time: **30 - 60 minutes**
Ages: **10 and up**
*Est. time to learn:* 10-20 minutes

Ingenious is the new abstract placement game from internationally-renowned game designer Reiner Knizia. Players place colored tiles on the hexagonal board, scoring points, blocking opponents' tile placement, and trying to protect themselves from being blocked by their opponents.

Marvelously elegant and compulsively replayable, Ingenious is an excellent introduction to German-style abstract board games. It's ingeniously simple, and simply ingenious!

Image Gallery:

Cover
Medium
Large
Huge
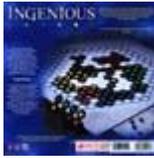
Back
Medium
Large
Huge

Photo 1
Medium
Large

Contents:

- 1 game board
- 120 tiles
- 1 bag
- 4 racks
- 4 score boards
- 24 counters
- rules

★★★★★

An easy to learn abstract game.

<div style="text-align:right">

Jason Birzer ➡
Jun 06, 2005

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Got to play the game last weekend with three others. The concept is pretty simple. You have a hexagonal-shaped board with domino-like pieces which are a combination of 6 colors (also shapes, for those who are colorblind). You place pieces next to the appropriate color pieces to score points, based on how many of the same color are lined up in a row from the piece you placed. If you place a blue piece next to a row of three blue pieces, you score three points for blue. This works in all directions, so you can score a bunch of points on a single play. When you get 16 points in a particular color, you can play a second tile on your turn. The maximum score for each color is 16.

In practice you can end up with large areas of a particular color. Also, though, other players can be shut out of colors by judicious play. This is particularly true late in the game, when space is at a premium and it is difficult to gain points for a particular color if it isn't blocked in. The bonus for getting 16 points is pretty big, especially if you chain a few together. In one turn, I was able to get three bonus placements. Pretty good opportunity to make things tough for your opponents.

Overall, a pretty good game for times when you don't want something complicated, but still plays well.

Jason

★★★★★

An Abstract Game I Don't Hate!

<div style="text-align:right">

Christine Biancheria ➡
Apr 27, 2004

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This game had to fight quite an uphill battle against my unfavorable views on abstract games, but it certainly overcame them. I saw this game being played at a convention recently, and noted that although it sported great-looking bits, it seemed totally abstract. So without hesitation, I moved on. Then, while I was in-between activities, someone invited me into a four-player game, reassuring me that it took two minutes to learn and a half-hour to play. How could I say no to that?

I was certainly glad I relented. As they said, the rules took no time to learn. Basically, each player is dealt a secret hand of six double-hexagons. Each hexagon usually bears a different color although double colors regularly appear as well. On a turn, the player simply places a tile and then draws a new one. Each placement triggers immediate scoring. In essence, each part of the double tile is considered separately and scores for each hexagon of the same color that it can 'see' in any straight line. Each player has a scoreboard with stones to mark progress in each of the six colors. When a player reaches 18 points in any single color, the player gets to takes a second turn.

What makes the scoring interesting is that a player must move on all fronts because, at game's end, each player's worst category becomes their final score. I was thrilled to see this scoring rule imported from Tigris and Euphrates. I've always admired the rule, but am usually too daunted by the complexity of Tigris and Euphrates to actually play the game.

This one moves at a fast pace, and at least after the first few rounds, the tension begins to build as players are often forced into decisions between maximizing their own scores and keeping those bottom colors progressing (often at a

cost of setting up a scoring bonanza for others) and blocking one's fellow players but sacrificing one's own scoring opportunities in the process. The fact that you can see each player's scoreboards throughout the game, coupled with the ability to choose from six tiles each turn, makes for a nice tactical game. The luck factor is reduced not only by the choice of six tiles each turn, but also by a rule allowing a player to dump an entire hand of tiles in the event that the player is left with none in his or her worst color.

All of my games have taken only 20 to 40 minutes to play, and the game was great fun with any number of players as well. It's only drawback to me seems to be its price tag, but then again, now that I've splurged on it, I'm definitely enjoying the production values. The playtime this one will receive makes it all worthwhile anyhow. Highly recommended!!

★★★★☆

Bill Eldard ➜
Dec 02, 2005

Don't like abstract games? Try this one!

I agree with the previous reviews here. Ingenious is one of those rare abstract games that appeals to gamers who normally shun abstract games. At least, that is certainly the case in our gaming group.

The rules are very simple, but the 'Tigris & Euphrates'-model victory conditions make this game far more challenging than most abstracts. Novice gamers and longtime strategy gamers can all enjoy Ingenious.