

MazeMakers

A game for piecepack by Jorge Arroyo

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2-4 players, 1 piecepack set, (optional: a pentominos set), 30 minutes.

- **Introduction**

In this game players compete to find magical artifacts from an ancient maze. The maze is enchanted and players can change it's layout using only their minds. This way they can help themselves in their search or hinder their opponents. Coins placed number up on the maze represent either monsters (stronger the bigger the number on the coin) or artifacts (if the suit, revealed only to the player that lands there, matches the player's suit). First player to find 3 artifacts and exit the maze wins.

This game was designed to be played with a piecepack set and a pentominos set. The pentomino pieces are the walls for the maze. It gives a nice 3D feel to the game (each square section of the pentomino pieces has to be of the same approximate size as the small squares from the piecepack tiles). If you don't have a pentominos set, there's an alternative mechanic, although it changes the game a bit.

- **Setup**

Make a square board with all the tiles (5x5 tiles, leaving a hole in the lower right corner). Then shuffle the coins numbered 2, 3 and 4 number up (without revealing their suits). If less than four players are playing, only use the 2, 3 and 4 coins of as many suits as the number of players plus 1. Each player chooses one of the available suits and takes the corresponding pawn, dice and the three remaining coins (ace, blank and 5) setting them suit up in front of them.

In playing order, each player places one pentomino piece on the board so that all the square sections are inside the board. Each square section on the piece has to be on top of a small square in the board. As soon as there are three pentomino pieces left to place, players stop placing them. The remaining pieces won't be used.

(Optional: No Pentominos) Before setting up the board remove one of the blank tiles (any) and then make the 5x5 board with a blank in the middle and the face up blank tile in the lower-right corner. In playing order, each player removes a tile of their choosing from the board (but not the face up tile) and places it on another spot on the board, at least adjacent to one other tile. until twelve pieces have been moved. It doesn't matter if places of the board become disconnected (even the face up tile, although this will make for a slow start). The face up tile is the starting/ending tile.

When the maze is done, each player in reverse order places one of their coins on a wall of their choice (on top of a pentomino piece). Only one piece can be placed on each wall. If there are less than 4 players, the remaining coins are left aside and not used.

(Optional: No Pentominos) Instead of placing the coin on a pentomino piece, place it on an empty space inside the board (where there's no tile).

Now, the number up coins are placed randomly on the board. The coins cannot be placed on the walls, but can be placed in any small square even if it's isolated. Also, players set their pawns on the empty lower-right corner of the board.

(Optional: No Pentominos) The players set their pawns on the suit-side up blank tile.

Last, players place the die for their suit in front of them showing a 5. This are the health points.

- Play

Each turn, a player may first move a wall that has one of his/her suit up coins on top (recovering the coin). If the player doesn't want to move a wall, he can place one of his suit up coins (if any remain) on a wall.

Then the player can move the same number of spaces orthogonally on the board as the number on his/her health die. A player can move through other players, but cannot land on the same space as another player. When moving through another player the other player may choose to block. In this case combat takes place (explained below).

When a player lands on a number up coin, he/she must stop and has to look at the other side (no one else can see the other side). If the other side is the same suit as his/her suit, then an artifact has been found and the player gets a bonus to all his/her combat rolls. If it's any other suit, a monster attacks the player.

Afterwards, the next player starts his/her turn and players keep on until a player finds 3 artifacts and exits the maze through the entrance.

- Moving a wall

A player can choose any pentomino piece that has one of his/her coins on top of it. Then he can place it anywhere on the board as long as all of its square sections are inside the board. Also, the piece cannot be placed on top of players or coins. Note that the piece can be rotated and flipped, but all the square sections have to lay on the board.

(Optional: No Pentominos) A player can choose any space on the board where there is a coin of his/her suit and after taking back the coin, the player can take any of the board tiles where there is not a coin or a player and place it where the coin used to be. If there is no board tile unoccupied, the player doesn't take the coin and cannot move the wall.

- Placing a coin on top of a wall

If the player decides not to (or cannot) move a wall, then he/she can place a suit up coin on any empty pentomino piece. The player can only use one of the starting suit up coins. Artifact coins are placed number up in front of the player and should not be mixed with the suit up coins.

If the player wishes to take control of a wall that is already under the control of another player, they must place one more coin on it than the number of coins the other player has on it. Then the other player gets his/her coin(s) back. If the current player doesn't have the necessary number of coins available, then he/she can't take control of that piece.

Note that the maximum number of coins that can be used for this purpose is three, as each player can't have more than three suit side up coins in front of him/her.

Also note that if a player has more than one coin on a given piece at the start of his/her turn, then he/she must move that piece as his/her first action of that turn. This way, players can make sure they can move a piece, but can't block it for more than one round.

(Optional: No Pentominos) Instead of placing the coin(s) on top of a pentomino piece, just place the coin(s) on an empty space on the board (where there are no tiles).

- Moving

After one (or neither) of the steps before have been completed, the player can move his/her pawn. Players move through the small squares in the board, as many steps as the number on their health die and can move through other players (if the other player doesn't block) but cannot move through walls or land on the same spot as another player. At the beginning of the game, any empty square adjacent to the starting space is a legal move.

If the player moves through another player, the other player can block the movement. The moving player should ask the other player if he/she is going to block before continuing. If the other player wants to block, then players engage in combat:

Each player rolls a die adding bonuses from artifacts if necessary. The player with the lowest roll takes 1 point of damage. If there is a tie, the blocking player takes the damage. If the moving player wins, he can keep moving normally. If the blocking player wins, the moving player stays on the space he/she was just before being blocked and stops moving.

If during moving, the player lands on a number up coin, he has to look at the other side of the coin secretly:

- If the coin's suit is the same as his/her suit, then an artifact has been found: the player shows it to everyone and then places it number up in front of him/her. Each artifact gives the player a +1 bonus to all the combat rolls from now on and also lets the player recover 1 health point at the moment of getting it.
- If the coin's suit is not the same, then a monster has been encountered. The player has to engage in combat, rolling a die and adding 1 for each artifact he/she owns. If the result is higher or equal than the number on the coin, then the monster is defeated. If not, he takes one point of damage and then places the coin back where it was (number up).

Note that players cannot tell other players what suit the coins are unless they find an artifact. A player that tells is automatically out of the game.

- **Death**

If ever a player reaches 0 health points, then he/she dies.

- **Winning**

The first player to get three artifacts and exit the maze (landing in the starting space) wins the game. If another player manages to exit the maze with three artifacts in the same turn, it is considered a tie. Optionally, the player with more health points can be considered the winner, or combat can be used to determine the winner if it is desired.

- **Variants**

Variant 1: If you don't like player elimination, a dead player can be revived and starts again in the starting space with 2 health points only. The player also loses control of any walls, taking back all his/her suit up coins that are on walls.

Variant 2: If you want to make things easier, the starting space can heal players at the rate of 1 point per whole turn spent there. So players can go back to the starting space to recover health, or (if using the first variant) can choose to stay there if they die to start again with more than 2 health points.

Variant 3: If you want more challenge, then the loser of a combat roll loses the difference between the number they needed to roll and what they did roll in hit points. So a player who fights a 4 monster and rolls 2 would lose 2 hit points. In combat vs. another player, the losing player loses the difference between the winning player's roll and his/her roll.

Feel free to combine any and all the variants in any way you desire.