

Game Building Project by Brad Finlayson (bradfinlayson.com)

Class 1: Introduction, Overview of Process, Group Formation, Concept Planning (Steps 1 to 8)

Class 2: Prototype Construction, Playtesting & Tweaking (Steps 9 and 10)

Class 3: Playtesting & Tweaking, Final Game Construction (Steps 10 & 11)

Class 4: Present & Play your Game (Step 12)

Step 1: Group Formation

Get into groups of 3 or 4 people that share similar interests and have a good variety of skills.

Although everyone in your group can share in all the tasks, it can be helpful to designate one of three roles to each person. That person is responsible for overseeing a particular aspect of the game's creation. Discuss with your group what each member's strong points are to see who fits which role best.

Designer : This person is responsible for the design, writing and rules of the game.

Expert : This person is responsible for the story, research and accuracy of the content of the game.

Artist : This person is responsible for the art and beautification of the game parts.

Step 2: Select a Theme

Pick a theme that will guide your choices in game play, components and art.

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|---------|---------------|----------------|
| Abstract | Adventure | Animals | Environmental | Exploration |
| Fantasy | History | Math | Music | Mythology |
| Prehistoric | Science Fiction | Space | Sports | Transportation |

Step 3: Name your Game

Brainstorm name ideas for your game. You do not have to choose a final name until you create your final copy.

Step 4: Object of the Game

Describe what a player or team must do in order to win the game. Is your game competitive or co-operative or both?

Step 5: Determine Number of Players

Games can be designed to be played solo, one on one, groups, or in teams. The number of players and teams will determine the number of components you will need to make.

Step 6: Select a Main Mechanic

Although games often combine multiple mechanics, it is important to determine what the main one in your game is.

| | | | | |
|--------------|----------|----------|--------|-----------|
| Board | Bidding | Building | Card | Deduction |
| Dexterity | Maze | Memory | Puzzle | Racing |
| Role-Playing | Strategy | Trivia | | |

Step 7: Choose Components

Decide which of the following components you will use and what each component's function is.

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Board(s) | Cards (# of decks) | Counters (things collected) |
| Dice | Markers (used to keep track) | Money |
| Pencils | Player Pawns | Player Screens (give privacy) |
| Rules | Score Pad | Spinner |
| Tiles (re-arrangeable areas) | Timer | Tokens (represent things) |

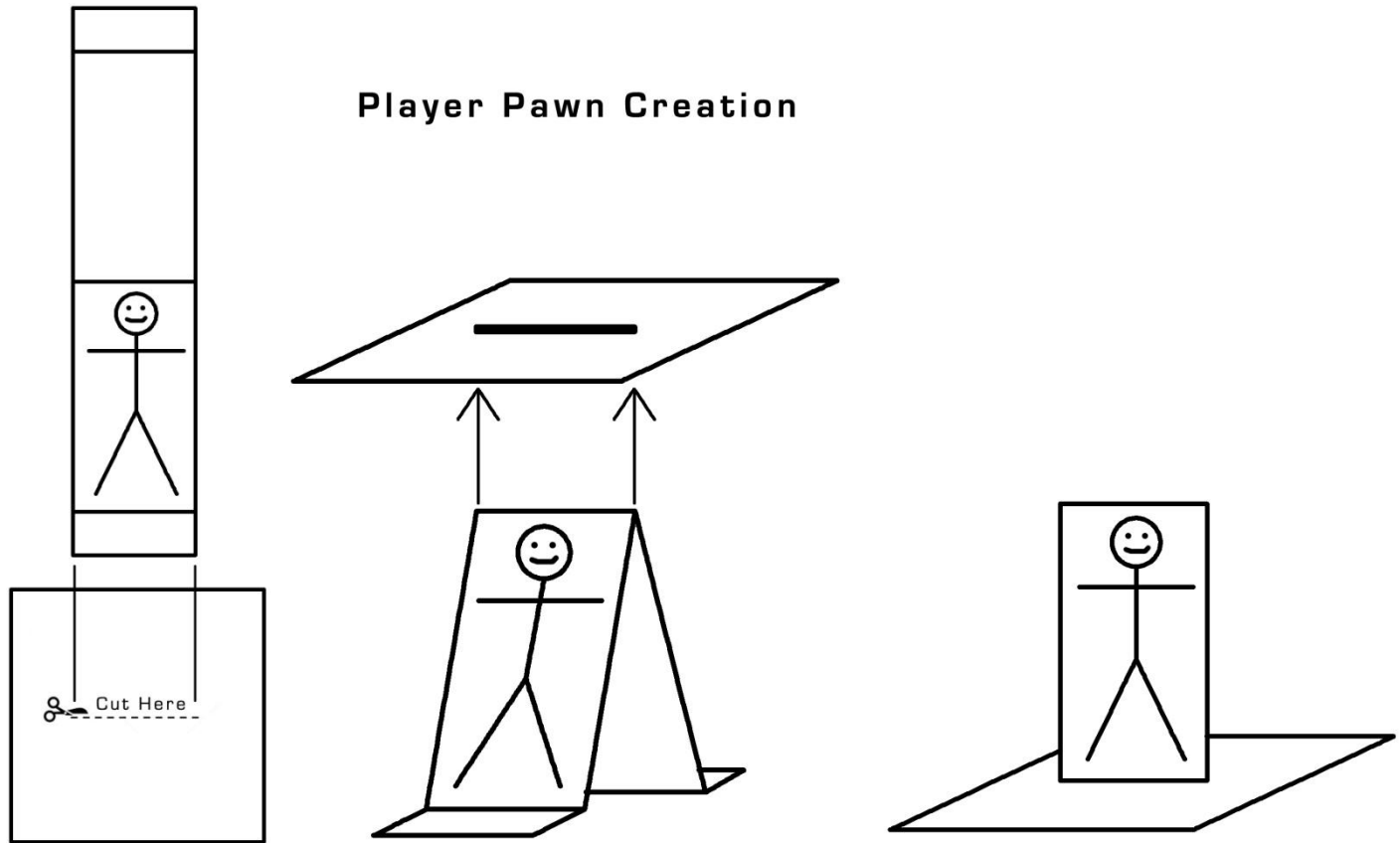
Step 8: Write the Rules

Write your rules on a separate piece of paper leaving lots of room for editing.

Contents of rules include in this order: game name, ages & numbers of players, game duration, object of game, game contents, assembly if required, game setup, game play sequence, winning, special conditions and gameplay variations

Step 9: Prototype Construction

Based on what you decided in the previous steps, in particular Step 7, make and/or find simple versions of all components. DO NOT include art yet. At this time, spelling, grammar and punctuation are only important if they affect understanding. All pieces can be made with blank or lined paper or card stock.



You can put an image of the back of the character on the back of the pawn or use it for game information. You can vary the size of the base and use it for game information.

Step 10: Playtesting & Tweaking

Playtesting is the main part of game development. Each time you playtest your game, answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper:

- 1) What rules were changed, removed, or added? Why?
- 2) What components need to be changed, removed, or added? Why?
- 3) Was the game fun? Why or why not?
- 4) Was there too much luck and not enough player choices?
- 5) Did the game take too long to play? Did the play sequence flow smoothly?

If you play your game three times in a row without changing anything, you may be ready to construct your final copy.

Step 11: Final Game Construction

After finalizing your game in playtesting, you can go ahead and create your beautiful, final copy!

Add colour and pictures to your parts. Flesh out the story if there is one. Make sure all your parts are a uniform size (especially decks of cards). Complete your rules so that they are legible with correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. Create a box and/or storage trays if desired.

Step 12: Present and Play your Game

Teach and play your game with family, friends and classmates. Also try letting people play your game for the first time without your help, using only your written rules. Listen to the players' feedback on your game and improve it further.