

FIGHT THE VIRUS

*A game for 2+ players by André Heines.
Graphics by Alfred Das.
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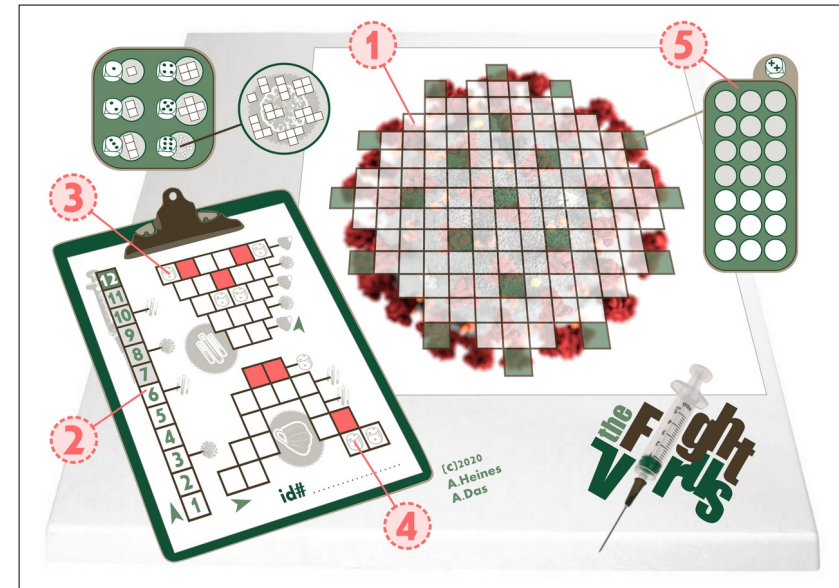
Background

A dangerous virus has spread quickly around the globe, turning into a pandemic. All over the world scientists are working on a cure and a vaccine. At the same time governments are trying to contain the virus. They use widespread tests and various measures in order to buy time for the researchers. Only those who are successful on all levels can ultimately defeat the virus threat. Each player represents a team of scientists. All teams are researching on the virus and counseling their governments.

Game Overview

The players use the dice to progress in various areas. They have to analyze the virus, advance the research, test the population and contain the virus with sundry measures – all of this at the same time. In order to analyze the virus in play, the players use polyomino shapes, while other areas need number values to be filled. To keep the game simple with regard to components, only classic six-sided dice (with pips) are needed to play.

Player Sheet



(1) Virus Analysis; (2) Research; (3) Testing; (4) Spread Curve;
(5) Analysis Progress

Note: The field “id#” is for players to enter their identification or name.

Setup

Each player takes one player sheet. Also needed are pens or pencils and two six-sided dice with pips. Dice with numbers will work as well. An overview can be found on the player sheet. The player who wore a protective mask most recently will start the game.

Gameplay

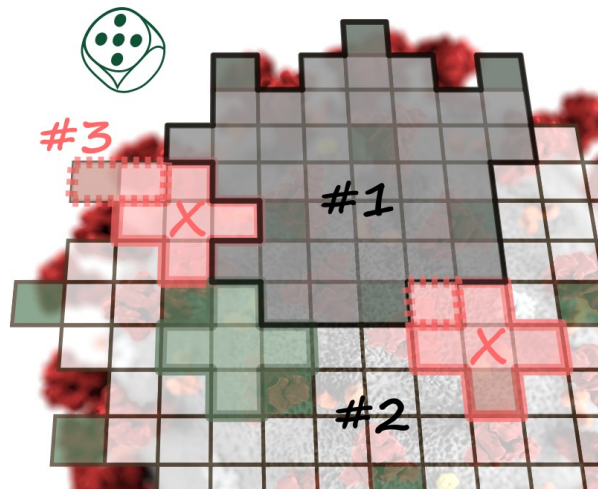
The active player rolls the two dice and uses one of them to make progress analyzing the virus. The second die is used to make progress in one of the other three areas. All other players may use one of the die results and use them for one area of their choice. When all players are done, the dice are handed to the next player in clockwise turn order. Dice that can't be used are skipped. Such setbacks may happen, especially in later stages of the game.

If a player rolls doubles (except for double sixes), the active player may roll both dice again. It is not allowed to re-roll only a single die.

1) Virus Analysis

The die face shows which shape can be filled (see graphic). If a 6 is chosen, any shape of up to 4 contiguous squares (fitting in a 2 by 3 grid) can be used to fill spaces in this area.

The shape has to be used entirely and may not go over the border of this area. Each player decides individually, where they want to fill out the first shape.



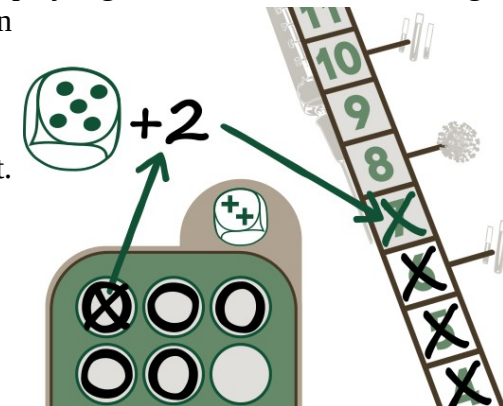
After that new shapes have to be filled orthogonally adjacent to an already filled squares. The player shall not leave a gap in the virus analysis. This means that there may be no more than two separate sections at any point: an analyzed one, and one that is not analyzed.

If at any point one of the spikes (green squares) is covered, the player may circle one of the 21 analysis progresses. Those can be used to add 1 or 2 points to a single die. If an analysis progress field is used, the circled field is then crossed out.

Note: To win the game, 12 of those analysis progresses are needed in the research area. In addition analysis progress can be reduced by adverse circumstances (see there).

2) Research

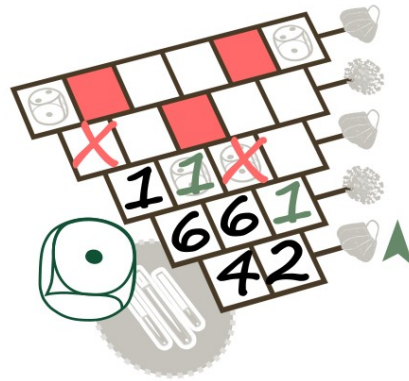
In the research area the numbers from 1 to 12 have to be crossed out in ascending order, beginning with 1. Values above 6 can only be achieved with analysis progress from the virus analysis. A single analysis progress adds 1 or 2 points to any die result. Some of the higher values require more than one analysis progress. Progress in research will help to improve the virus analysis and testing. When a player crosses out the 3 or 8 square, that player will get a bonus action for the virus analysis. For filling the 6 or 10 square the player gets a bonus action for testing. A player must fill all red squares in the testing and spread curve areas before the 12th square of the research can be crossed out.



3) Testing

In order to successfully fight the virus, many tests have to be carried out. The broader the testing, the better infections can be spotted and traced. This is crucial to effectively contain the spread.

Players have to fill the squares with numbers from 1 to 6 (exception: analysis progress). All squares directly underneath must be already filled. Additionally, the numbers have to be higher than the ones in the squares directly underneath. The only exception is the 1. It can be placed in any square, except above another 1. The same number may be used multiple times in the same row.



The red squares are testing goals that have to be met in order to win the game. Rows do not have to be completed before entering numbers in higher rows. Filling rows completely however does provide bonus actions. Depending on the row, the bonus actions help directly with the virus analysis or the flattening of the curve. Additionally some squares provide an extra-die bonus action.

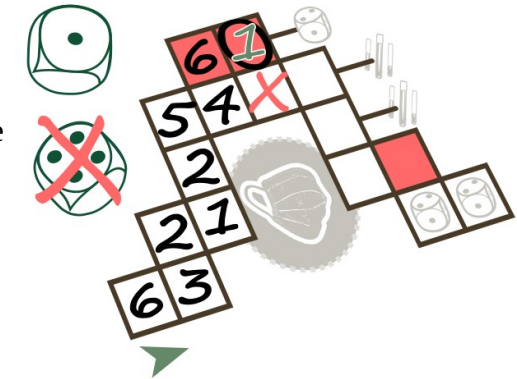
Caution: If a 1 is placed beside a 6 only a number modified by an analysis progress can go on top of those.

4) Spread Curve





In order to prevent an overstressing of the health care systems, the numbers of new infections have to be held as low as possible. It is therefore important to take various measures.

In this area neighboring squares may only be filled out with different numbers. A column must be filled entirely before entering a number in a different column.

The red squares must be filled out in order to win the game. As soon as the marked rows are filled completely, the player may use the indicated bonus action. Additionally, some squares provide an extra-die bonus action.



Bonus Actions

-  A shape, equal to a rolled “6”, may be filled in the virus analysis area.
-  The player may enter any number in the next empty square.
-  The player may enter a “1” in the testing area.
-  Instead of using only a single die, a passive player activating this bonus action may use the second die as well. The additional die must be used in the same turn it is unlocked. An active player may fill a square with this bonus action, but will not receive the extra-die.

Note: None of these bonus actions has to be performed. But if a player wants to perform them, this has to be done immediately.

Adverse Circumstances

Whether populists, conspiracy theorists or dubious scientists, they all endanger the common goal with distracting messages in social media. They instigate people and spread false information. This can hamper the measures taken to fight the virus substantially.

If one die shows a 6 and the other either a 5 or a 6 (without analysis progress), the players suffer a setback before applying the die results as normal.

When rolling a 5 and a 6 the next empty square of the spread curve has to be circled. A circled square can only be filled with the number on the opposite side of a die (e.g. 1 and 6), compared to the previously filled neighboring square (see graphic “spread curve”). If the next empty square is neighboring two different numbers, the next possible free square is circled instead. The same rule applies if another 5 and 6 are rolled, and two neighboring squares would have to be circled. If there is more than one legal square, the circled one has to be filled first.

Rolling double-sixes: all players have to cross out their next unused analysis progress. If a player has no unused activated analysis progress, one of the not activated progresses has to be crossed out. It has to be activated by crossing out another spike before other analysis progresses can be used.

End of Game

The game ends when a player crosses out the twelfth square of the research area. This may happen during another player’s turn. The player finishing their research first wins the game. If two players win the game with the same die result, they share the victory. And when the virus is defeated, everyone wins anyway!

Variant for Larger Player Counts

The player count for this game is basically not limited. But in order to speed it up and reduce the slight disadvantage due to player order, players should share dice rolls. There should be no more than four active dice rolls. Additional, before the game starts, players simply choose which active player’s rolls they want to use as their active turn.

In addition, this variant makes it easy to play this game online via video streams.

Credits and Expression of Thanks

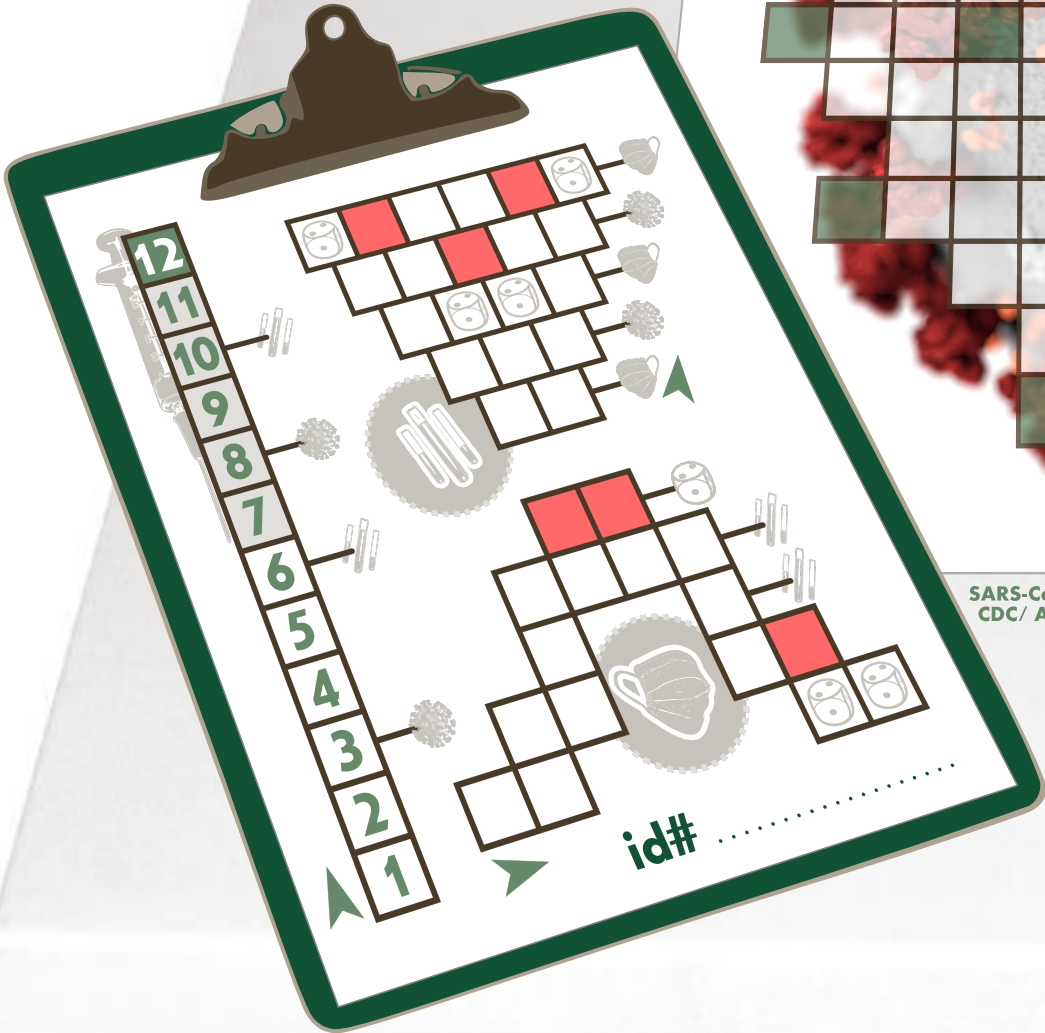
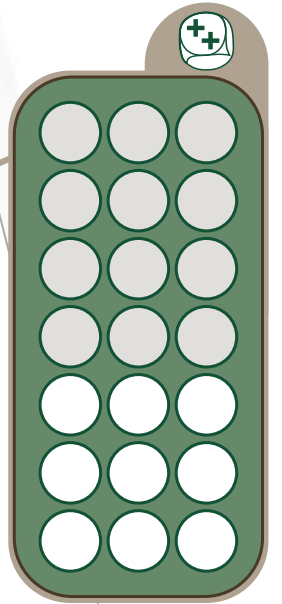
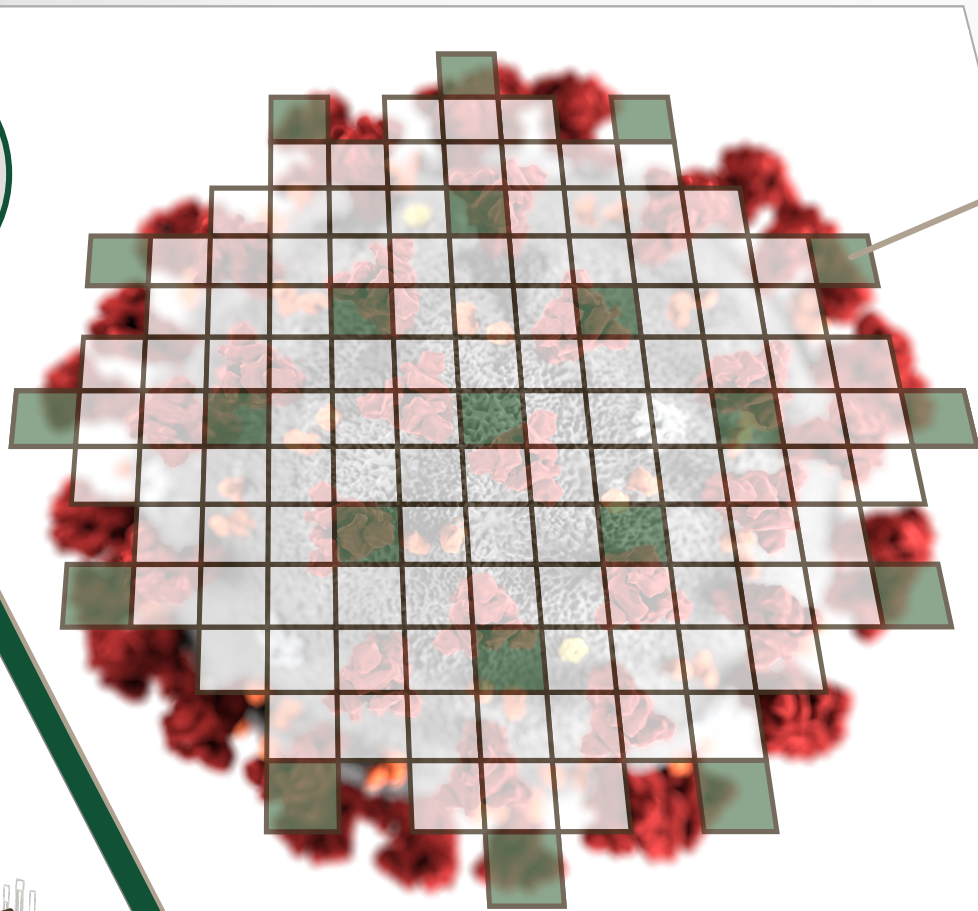
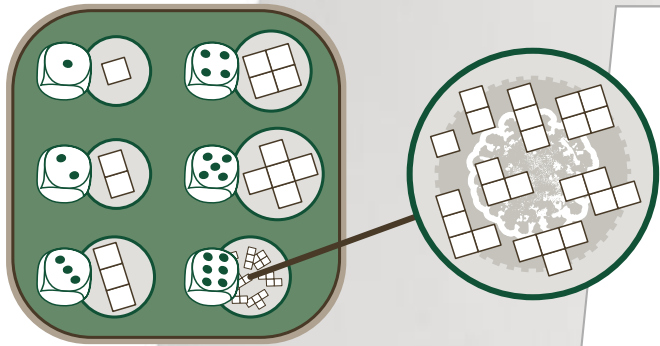
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SARS-CoV-2 image credit:

CDC/ Alissa Eckert, MS; Dan Higgins, MAMS



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