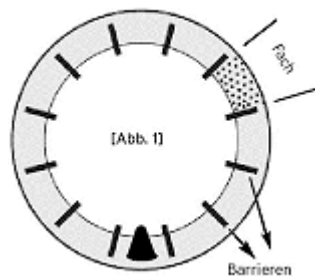


Hamster Wheel

A "Role playing game" that's spinning completely out of control.



As everybody knows, Lemmings sometimes decide to throw themselves mindlessly over cliffs. Hamsters on the other hand are demonstrably further developed, civilised even, and being so, have developed the technique of only running in wheels, saving them from the risk of falling over anything. But, like all developments, it has its disadvantages. Any influence that the hamster exerts on one side of its tiny ring world, can lead to catastrophic consequences on the other. And it was while we were considering this distaff element of the hamster's technique, that we suddenly saw the way straight to the heart of our new game. According to our latest theories, the world is not a disc, as we believed when we developed our last game "Bamboleo", but is instead a ring. We believe that this new addition to the Theory of Evolution, will open up vast new fields for research. Even if our new beliefs mean us having to suffer the tortures of the Inquisition, still we are coming closer and closer to the certainty that "but nonetheless, it still turns". We hope therefore that our tiny hamster model of this brave new world will prove great fun, and that you don't fall out of your "Role" too often.



Contents:



A hamster wheel with black wooden divisions inside it. 28 wooden playing pieces in 7 colours (ie 4 identical sets of pieces). 1 Black pyramid piece. These Rules. No Hamsters. Not even Albert.

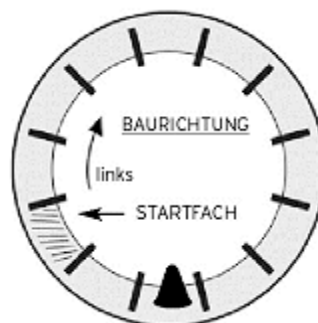
Preparation:

The hamster wheel should be placed on a flat stable table, if possible, so placed that the players can look through it. Place the black pyramid piece in the lowest section of the wheel. Each player takes a complete set of playing pieces, consisting of seven pieces, (one of each colour!). When playing with two players, each player takes two sets. If you are playing with three players, and have already played a few times, you may care to split the fourth set between the players. If there are four players, they should play as two teams. In this case the partners should sit next to each other so that each team takes two goes, before the other team plays.

Course of play:

Play takes place in a clockwise direction. The player with the shakiest hand starts. They must attempt to place one of their playing pieces in the second section clockwise from the section containing the black pyramid piece. The other players then continue to add more playing pieces, always in the direction of building (Clockwise). (vgl. Abb. 2).

Tip: In order that the game isn't too easy, you shouldn't place more than one piece in the opening section (ie the section, two spaces clockwise from the pyramid).

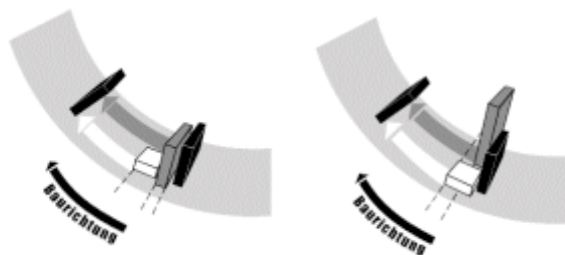


Each player has three choices when taking their turn.

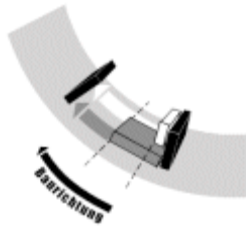
1) They may place a playing piece in the same section as the last player did. In this case they must play a piece of a different colour from any already in that section, and the new piece must be "higher" in the direction of building, than the last piece played was, (see diagram 3 at the top of page).

2) They may place a piece in the next free section in the direction of building.

3) They may place a piece in the next but one free section in the direction of building. Play continues in a clockwise direction. You will soon realise that the hamster wheel doesn't stay where it started, and that as it rolls, it's contents also start to move about.



The first two examples are legal. The white block is "higher" in the direction of building than the previously placed black piece.



The third example is not legal, the white piece here is not as "high" as the front corner of the black piece.

Failed attempts:

If a piece or pieces falls out of the wheel onto the table, the player whose turn it is must take them and their turn is over. The back pyramid counts as a normal piece in this case. Pieces that fall, but remain within the wheel, are left as they are. If the newly placed piece stays within the wheel, it is left in place. If the player hasn't yet managed to place it though, they finish their move immediately, and take that piece back. The player must make a real effort to place the piece that they have chosen. If they can't manage this, they must simply let it fall out of their hand into the wheel, and hope that it stays there. If it does, it counts as a successful turn, if not, the player ends their turn and takes the piece back, along with any others that may have fallen out of the wheel.

Constructive passing:

If a player doesn't think that they have any chance of placing a piece successfully, (before they have tried), they may try the following. They take a piece from one of the two lowermost sections of the wheel and places it into a section of their choice that doesn't already contain a piece of the same colour. Should this lead to one or more pieces falling out of the wheel, the player must take these back.

Higher Powers:

Should any pieces fall out of the wheel between turns, without any player having disturbed the wheel, these are placed to one side. The next player to fail to successfully place a piece, must take these pieces back into their hand. In this case they are doubly punished.

Game End:

A round of the game ends when one player gets rid of all their

pieces.

Hamster Wheel for Four

The game is played by two teams of two. The partners in each team should sit next to each other. If one player in a team has already got rid of all their pieces, they may take a piece from their partner's stock and place that. If however this attempt fails, the player must take back that piece and any others that have fallen from the wheel, and continue play with them.

The game for four finishes

when either a team has got rid of all their pieces, or one player from each team has got rid of all their pieces, in which case the team with the lesser number of pieces remaining, wins.

Tips:

If the wheel has rolled away from the centre of the table, a player may push it back carefully into the centre, using one hand. The wheel may of course not be turned during this action. Players may hold on to the hamster wheel with their spare hand while placing a piece. Once the piece is placed though, they must release the wheel and live with any consequences. While placing a piece, the player may rearrange any other pieces already in that section.

Thanks:

We would like to give our special thanks to our hamster "Albert", who took part in endless test runs of the game for us, so many in fact, that he eventually perished, exhausted. We hope that Albert has now gone to a quieter, better, hamster world, where hamster wheels find no place. As a result of course, we now have a hamster wheel, without a hamster to go with it. As a measure of our sorrow, we would like to name Albert as the patron saint of this little game.

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Artwork Stefan Sälzer

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This translation John Webley

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