ICE CULT

Number of players: 2-4
Playing time: ca. 30 min.
Age: 10 + years

Ways out of the Ice

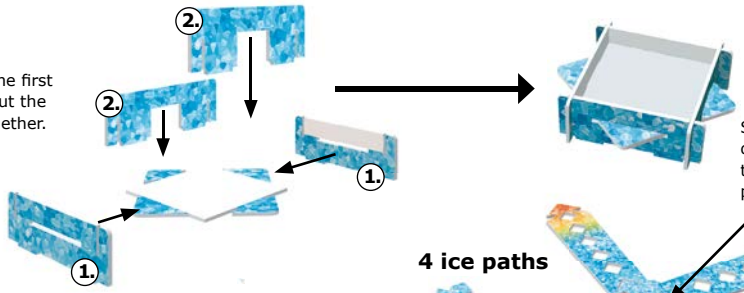
by Joe Wetherell

It is bitterly cold at the Arctic Circle. Even the compass has frozen. Its direction arrows, now inside thick blocks of ice, chaotically point in all directions.
Whatever way you turn it and twist it – in order to get out of this polar station, you have to figure out for yourself the escape routes in all four cardinal directions. To this end, you turn your compass arrows towards the top of the ice cubes that point the way. Use clever tactics by getting on another player's bandwagon so that you get to warmer climes faster! Can you turn your journey into success?

Game materials and set-up:

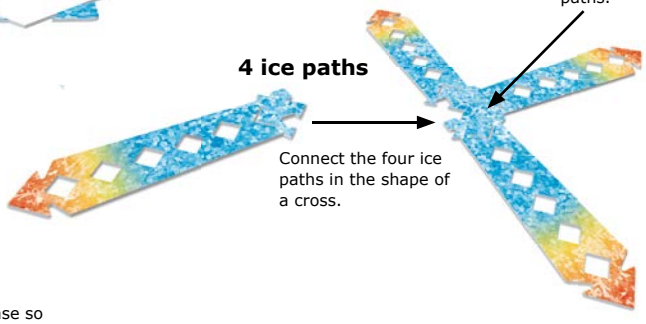
1 base

Before the first game, put the base together.



Stick the base into the designated recesses at the center of the ice paths.

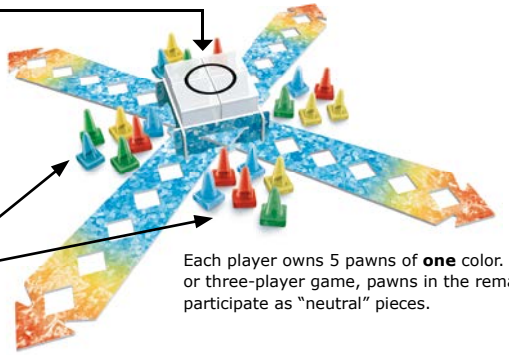
4 ice paths



Connect the four ice paths in the shape of a cross.

4 transparent ice blocks

Then put the four ice blocks in the base so that the black arcs form a circle **on the top**.



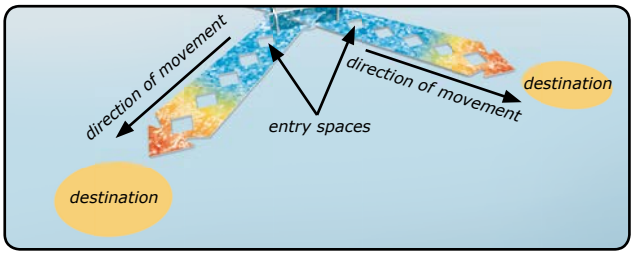
20 pawns in 4 colors

Position all pawns near the ice blocks (**between** ice paths of your choice). This is their **starting position**.

Each player owns 5 pawns of **one** color. In the two- or three-player game, pawns in the remaining colors participate as "neutral" pieces.

Object of the Game:

Move your figures away from the cold center to the warming ends of the ice paths. If your five pawns are the first to arrive at this destination, you win.



Course of the Game:

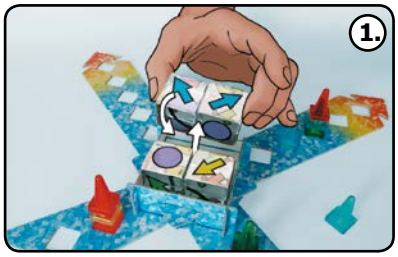
Players play in turn.
On your turn,

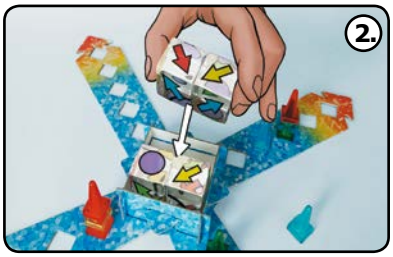
- **first** tilt ice blocks (action 1) and
- **then** move pawns (action 2)

After that, it's the next player's turn.

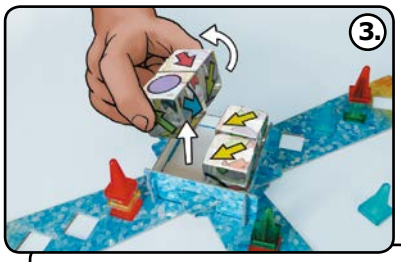
Action 1: Tilting ice blocks

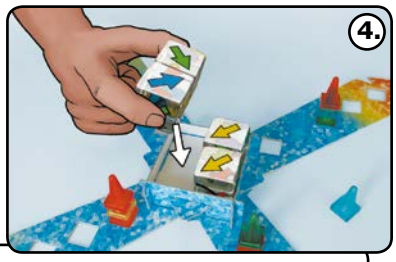
First tilt **two adjacent** ice blocks **90 degrees** from their **common** central axis.





After that, choose another two adjacent ice blocks and do **the same** with them. These can even be the same ice blocks as before; in this case, however, you may **not** tilt them back into their initial position (i.e., the position they had before your turn).





This is how to do it:
It's best to press the sides of the two ice blocks you have chosen together. Then lift the blocks and tilt both of them together by 90 degrees into the desired direction. Now put them down at their new location. Always keep in mind that you may never change/ exchange their positions.

Attention: You are not allowed to move any figures before or in between the two tilting procedures!

Note:
Read the game instructions carefully and then, while tilting the cubes, leave as little as possible to chance! Since the cubes are transparent, you can always see where the arrows, circles and arcs on the cubes are. Look closely and plan tactically what symbols (in what orientation) you want to bring to the top of the cubes. This way, you can deliberately get the desired results and then move the figures accordingly. (Besides this, you can see to it that the other players have difficult tasks to face on subsequent turns).
Of course, the visual perspective in ICE CULT is tricky … and your spatial sense might give you quite a runaround. But it's these very **challenges** that are **part of the game**!

Therefore, the following rule applies:

Once you have started a tilting movement, you may not abort it!

Action 2: Moving figures

The symbols that are **now on the top side of** the four cubes determine what you are going to do:

For **each arrow**, move **one** pawn of the corresponding color exactly **one space ahead**.
Always observe the **movement rules** (see text box below)!
You may not let any arrow go to waste that you can use for (at least) one possible move. However, you may first use the possibilities of the black arcs (see below).

Movement rules (look Example 1 and 2)**:**
You always move pawns
- in the **direction of the arrow**
- from inside to outside, i.e., **away from the ice blocks**.
- along the **ice path** to which the respective **arrow is pointing**.

In doing so, you may
- move a pawn that is already on this ice path,
  or
- place a pawn from the starting position onto the innermost space of this ice path.

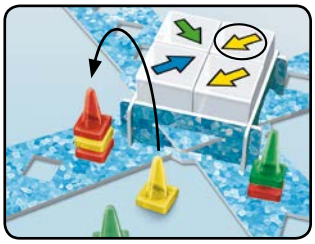
When a figure enters an occupied space, you stack it on top of all pawns standing there.

When you move a pawn with other pawns on top of it, you take all these pawns "piggyback" with you. (Any pawns underneath the pawn you move stay put.)

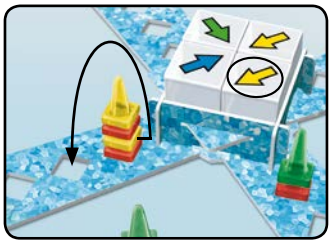
You may not let any arrow go to waste if there is a possibility to make a move with it. However, always consider the possibilities provided by the black arcs!

Every player may have any number of pawns on any ice paths.
Pawns can never switch from one ice path to another.

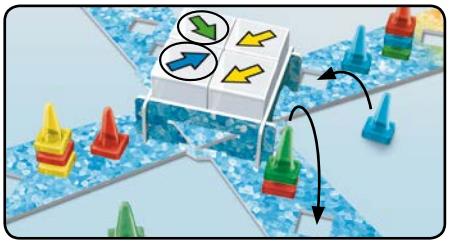
Example 1:



Yolanda Yellow moves a yellow pawn to the entry space of the ice path indicated. There, her pawn lands on top of a stack of figures.

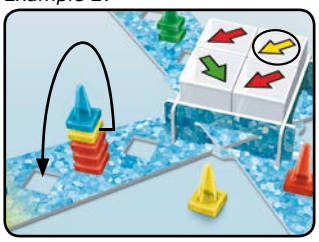


Yolanda uses the second yellow arrow for moving the yellow pawn that is sitting further down in the stack; as usual, all pawns on top of this one are carried along with it.

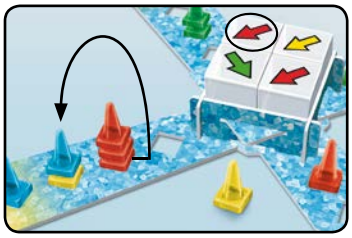


Yolanda places a blue pawn onto the ice path indicated by the blue arrow.
With the green arrow, Yolanda moves a green pawn on the ice path positioned in the direction of the pointing arrow.

Example 2:



Ruby Red uses the yellow arrow to "throw off" a yellow pawn (and the blue one sitting on top of it) from her red 3-pawn stack.

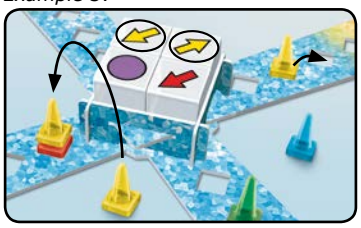


Then she uses a red arrow for moving her pawn sitting at the bottom of this stack and takes with it the two pawns sitting on top of it.

With the second red arrow, Ruby advances her three pawns again.
The green arrow goes to waste since there is no green pawn on the ice path indicated or in the starting position.

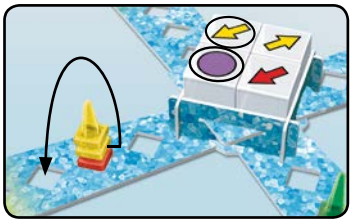
For **each** purple **circle**, you **"copy" any arrow** (one that lies on top). For this, you choose an arrow and use it to make **one additional** move.
If there are several purple circles lying on top, you may choose whether to "duplicate" different arrows or the same arrow multiple times.
If there is no arrow lying on top, purple circles are irrelevant.

Example 3:



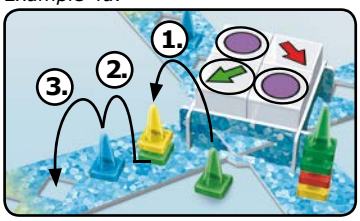
First, Yolanda moves one yellow pawn each for the two yellow arrows.

Then she uses the red arrow to have two yellow pawns carried along „piggyback" by a red pawn.



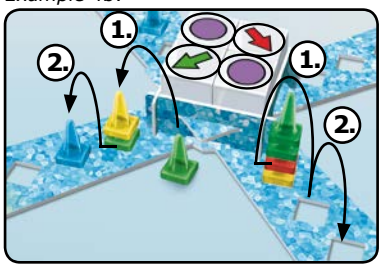
Finally, Yolanda uses the purple circle to make an additional move with a yellow arrow.

Example 4a:



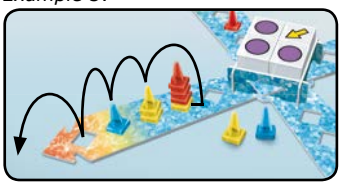
Gary Green decides to use both purple circles for the green arrow. That means he makes three moves with green pawns. He moves one pawn once and another pawn twice. He would also have been allowed to move three pawns one space each instead, or one pawn three spaces.

Example 4b:



Here, Gary uses both purple circles for two arrows in different colors. In this example, he moves each of two green pawns once and one red pawn (with green pawns sitting on top of it) twice.

Example 5:

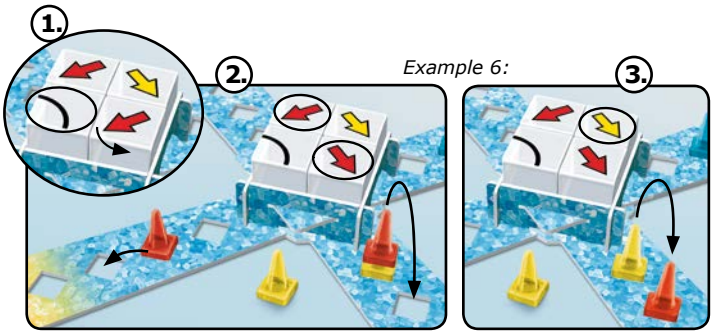


With three purple circles, you use the same arrow four times overall: Here also, you may distribute the four moves (in the direction the arrow points) among pawns in the corresponding color.
In this example, Ruby Red moves one yellow pawn four spaces. This way, she manages to bring her red pawns sitting on top of that stack to the destination.

When you move a figure that is part of a stack, the pawn takes along all the ones sitting on top of it – you don't need to use extra arrows for that.

For **each** black **arc**, you **may turn any cube horizontally** by **90 degrees** to the left or right.
You can choose to make this turn (or turns) before, in between or after moving pawns.
-> If this generates movement possibilities for arrows that did not allow you to move before, you have to make such a move.
-> If an arrow that allowed you to move before now – after the horizontal turn – points in a direction where no move is possible any more, the (previously possible) move goes to waste (unless you already made this move before you turned the cube).

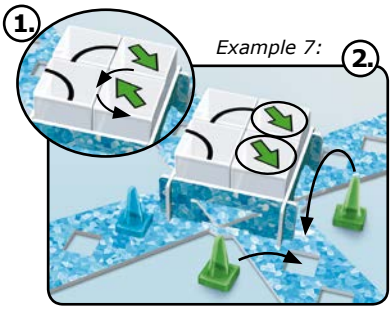
Example 6:



Yolanda Yellow uses the arc for turning a red arrow (1.). Then, Yolanda moves two red pawns in different directions (2.).

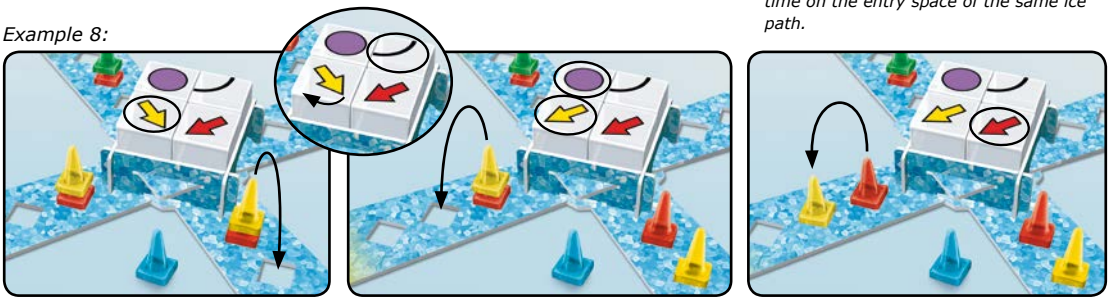
After that, she can use the yellow arrow to put one of her own pawns on top of a red one.

Example 7:



With the help of the two black arcs, Gary Green turns one green arrow twice. This way, he can stack two green pawns at a time on the entry space of the same ice path.

Example 8:



Using the yellow arrow, Ruby Red moves one yellow pawn. Then, by using the black arc, she turns this arrow 90 degrees.

Now she uses the purple circle to make a second move with the yellow arrow.

Since the yellow arrow and the red arrow are now pointing in the same direction, Ruby can stack her red pawn on top of the just-moved yellow pawn.

End of the Game:

Figures that **leave** the last space of an **ice path** arrive at the DESTINATION. Leave them at the end of this ice path!
The game ends when (at least) one player has brought **all 5 of his own pawns to the destination**.

You win the game if you move **your** fifth pawn to the destination.
If another player moves your fifth pawn to the destination, he wins if his fifth pawn is leaving the ice as well. If his fifth pawn is not leaving the ice as well, you win.
If you move the fifth pawn of other players to the destination, but not your own, these players share the victory.

! You **win the game early** if you manage to pile your five playing figures into a single stack. In this case, it's irrelevant whether or not there happen to be other players' pawns in the same stack.
Be careful: Don't make it too easy for your opponents! Prevent other players from bringing all their pawns onto one ice path! **!**

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