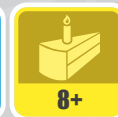
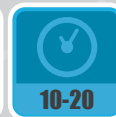


MENTAL BLOCKS



BY MICAH SAWYER AND JONATHAN GILMOUR



PANDASAURUS
GAMES

Mental Blocks - The game of puzzling perspectives!

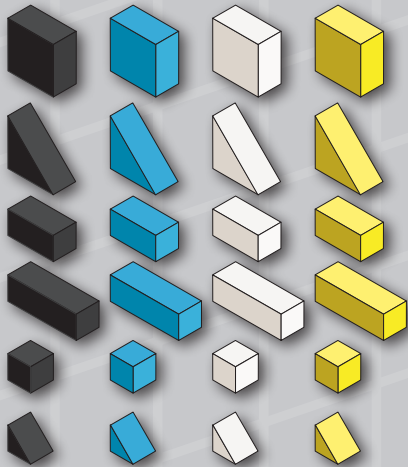
In Mental Blocks, players are racing against the clock together in real-time to build a specific, single shape in the center of the table, using the blocks provided, without showing other players their cards.

It won't be easy! Players can't show each other their cards, and could also have restrictions on what they can touch, how they can interact with blocks and other players, and what perspectives they can see. Ultimately culminating in a chaotic challenge of teamwork, clever thinking, and problem solving.

In case that isn't hard enough for you and your team, you could also choose to play with the Hidden Traitor Variant where one of your teammates is secretly working against you, trying to run down the clock, without being caught.

Mental Blocks has 60 puzzles of various difficulties; each of which can be played fully co-operative or with the tension inducing Hidden Traitor.

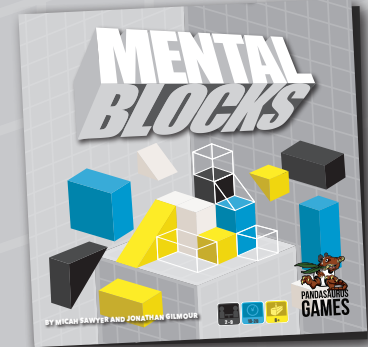
Components



24 Foam Blocks



270 Double-sided Perspective Cards



This Rulebook



9 Restriction Cards



9 Card Sleeves



5 Major Glitch Cards



4 Minor Glitch Cards

Card Anatomy

Perspective Cards

Mental Blocks features double-sided Perspective Cards that give each player their own unique view of the puzzle solution.

Each card has the corresponding Puzzle Number of the other Mode on the flip side. So, Family Puzzle 01 has Challenge Puzzle 01 on the flip side; F01-A has C01-A on the flip side, C01-E has F01-E on the flip side, and so on.



The Family Icon in the lower left corner and the top green border indicate the Family side. These puzzles are simpler to complete than the challenge side puzzles.



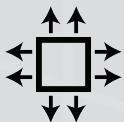
The Challenge Icon in the lower left corner and the top red border indicate the Challenge side. These puzzles are more difficult than the family puzzles.

F01-A The Puzzle Numbers are in the lower right corner. Here you see Family Puzzle 01, Card A. All cards labeled F01 belong to the same puzzle. Each puzzle will be comprised of 9 cards labeled A through I.

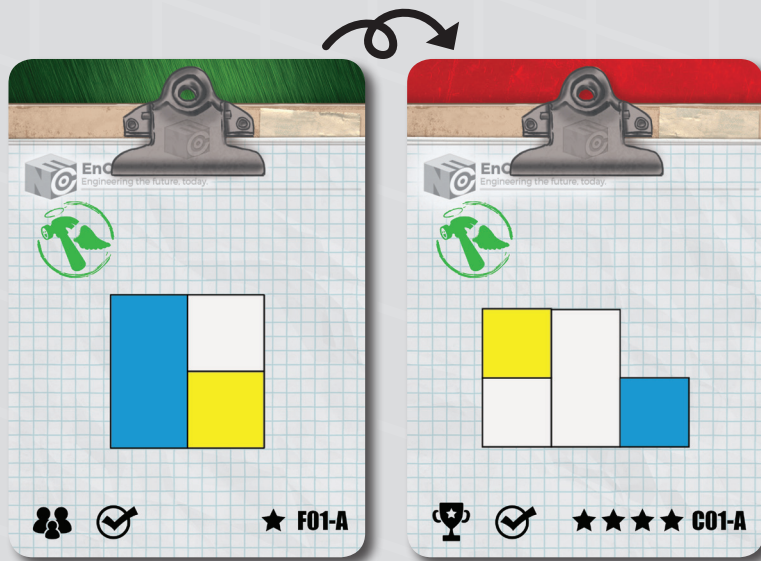
★ ★ ★ Each puzzle will also have 1-6 stars along the bottom showing the difficulty of the puzzle. 1-star Puzzles are the easiest and 6-star Puzzles are the most difficult.



All Required cards are used each play, with the optional cards being used for higher player counts. The Required / Optional icons in the bottom left indicate if the card is Required (The checkmark) or Optional (The dashed circle)



Some Perspective cards include this Any Side Up icon. For these puzzles it means you have no idea which orientation is up or down, left or right for the puzzle, and adds an additional layer of complexity.



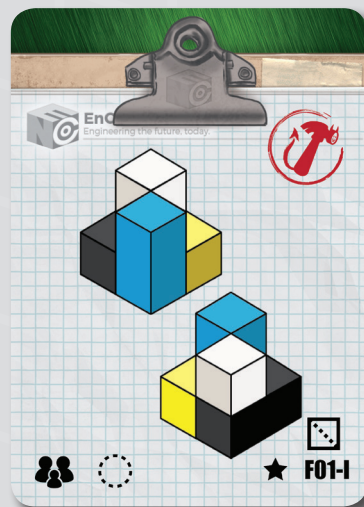
The "I" puzzle cards also include the "Squared Triangles" icon, to remind players about the Squared Triangles rule. See the Squared Triangles side bar for more details.



The green Good Builder icon in the top left lets you know that you are on the team attempting to complete the puzzle in time.

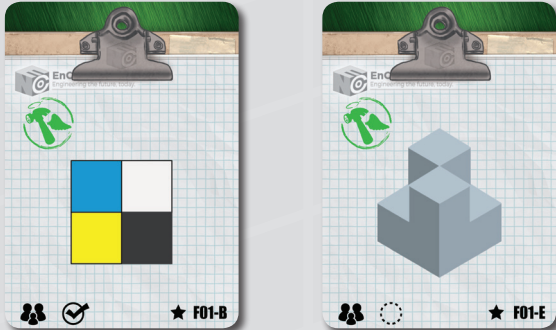


The red Traitor icon in the top right of the "I" card of each Puzzle Set will be used by the Traitor if playing the Hidden Traitor Variant, or as the answer key card if playing fully Cooperatively. In the center of each Traitor card will be two isometric, full-color side views of the puzzle. These will double as both the answer key and the information available for the Traitor.



The two types of perspectives.

The center of each Perspective card, except card "I", will picture either a full-color, 2-dimensional view of one side of the shape your team is trying to build, or a gray-scale, isometric view that does not include lines between individual blocks. This is **always** a side view, never from the top down or bottom up.

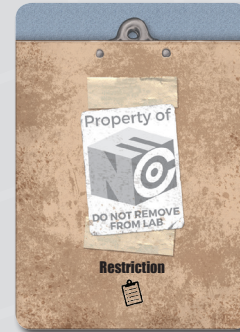


Example: Molly has the Perspective card on the left. She knows that when the puzzle is completed, from her perspective she will see a blue block above the yellow block, but she doesn't know if the blue is a square sitting on the yellow, or is actually a tall blue block sitting farther back with its bottom half being blocked by the yellow block.

Nathan has the Perspective card on the right. He knows that the finished shape will consist of 2 levels, and will have what appears to be 2 small squares on top of blocks in the base. But doesn't know if those square shapes are squares sitting on other blocks, or tall blocks.

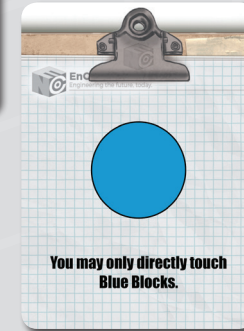
The orientation of the blocks in the picture is true from the player's perspective. At the end of the game, the structure built needs to match each player's Perspective for the solution to be correct and the players to win.

Restriction Cards

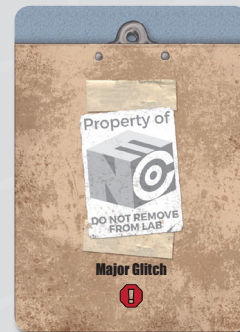


These cards offer individual challenges for each player. Note: They apply only to the player who drew the card and not to the entire table.

Examples:



Major and Minor Glitch Cards



These cards are used to increase the difficulty when playing the expert or genius level. The indicated Glitch Card is dealt face-up to the table and will be followed as a

rule by **all** players, including the Traitor if also playing the Hidden Traitor Variant.

Mental Blocks - Set Up

Step 1: Choose the puzzle that you wish to play.

There are two recommended ways to do so.

- Play through the Puzzles in order like a campaign, starting with Family 01 and working your way to Family 30, and then turning them over and working from Challenge 01 to Challenge 30.
 - Then to continue playing, increase difficulty and add in glitch cards to replay previous puzzles!
- Randomly choose a Puzzle based on difficulty ranking. 1-star Puzzles are the easiest and 6-star Puzzles are the most difficult.


Step 2: Collect the puzzle cards

Once you have selected a Puzzle to play, take all the cards with the corresponding Puzzle Number from the deck. Place the chosen play side face-down so you are looking at the opposite side of the cards. For example, if you want to play Family Puzzle 01, this means the green side will be face-down and you will be looking at the red side that shows Challenge Puzzle 01.



Important: You should *never* look at the cards of the Puzzle you intend to play. Use the Puzzle Number, Required Card, and Optional Card icons on the opposite side of the cards to help with set up.

Step 3: Create the Deck

A) First, take all of the cards marked required  and place them in a single pile.


Jonathan and 5 friends have decided to play Family Puzzle 02 at the Expert difficulty level without a Traitor. Jonathan pulls all 9 of the C02 Puzzle Number cards, A-I, out of the deck and places them with the green, F02 side face-down on the table. He will use the icons on the red, C02 side to aid in setup.



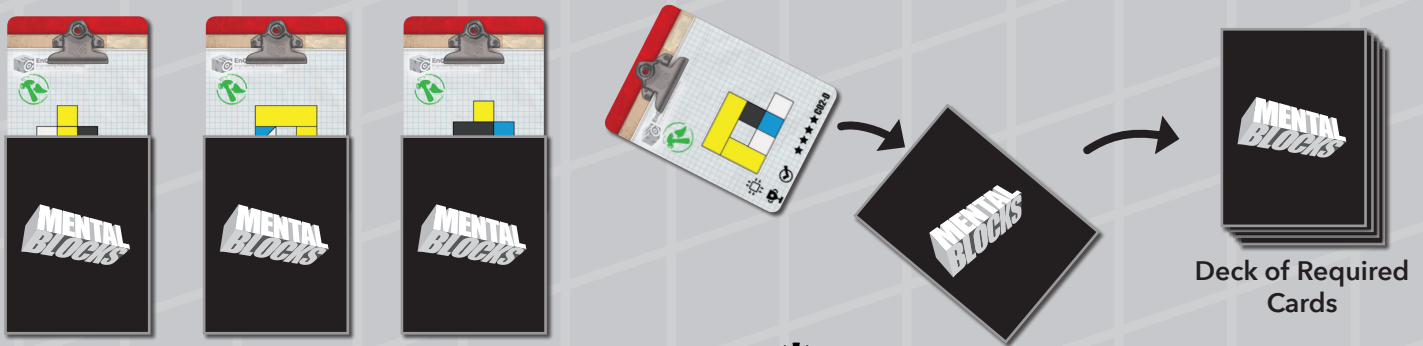
B) Remove the Traitor Card from the deck and set it to the side. It will not be used during play (unless playing with the optional hidden traitor variant), but will be used as the Puzzle answer key. It is critical that this card not be turned face-up at any time during play.


Jonathan takes out Puzzle Number card C02-I, careful not to look at the green side, and places it green side down next to the play area.



C) Place each of the Required cards  into the sleeves. Make sure you have aligned the cards so that the puzzle you are playing will be visible through the sleeve.

Using the icons on the Challenge (Red) side of the Perspective Cards, Jonathan takes all 4 of the Required cards and places them into the given card sleeves so that the green (Family) puzzle will be visible through the sleeves, again being very careful not to look at the cards, and then places the stack face-down next to the play area.



D) If playing with 5 or more players, also place all the Optional cards  into sleeves creating a deck of Optional cards. Otherwise, place the Optional cards back in the box, they will not be used this game.

a. Hidden Traitor Variant: If you have 5 or more players and wish to play with the chance of a Traitor, place the Traitor card in a sleeve and add it to the Optional card deck.

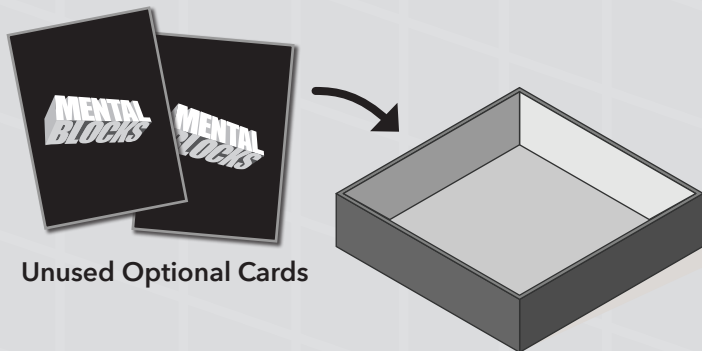
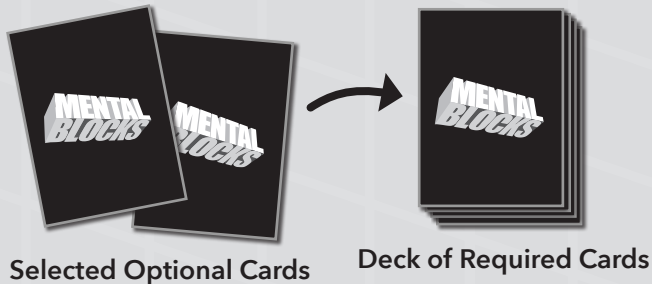
Note: We recommend playing a few games fully cooperative and then trying the Hidden Traitor Variant. If you are playing with 9 players, you must play with the Hidden Traitor Variant.

Since Jonathan's game has 6 players, he creates the Optional card deck just like he created the Required card deck. Since the team has chosen not to play with the Hidden Traitor, the Traitor card stays face-down on the table as the end-of-game Puzzle answer key.



E) Shuffle the deck of Optional cards. Add 1 Optional card face-down to the deck of Required cards per player **over 4**, so that there will be 1 card for each player. Any extra Optional cards go back in the box, as they will not be used this game.

Jonathan draws 2 Optional cards, since the team has 6 players, and adds them to the Required cards deck. Returning the 2 unused Optional cards to the box.



F) Shuffle the new deck of Perspective cards and deal each player a card face-down. Don't look at the card yet!

G) If you have **fewer than 4** players, place any cards not dealt face-down on the table. These will be the remaining "required" cards. These will be flipped face-up when play begins.

Step 4: Set the difficulty

Now you can adjust the difficulty of the game based on player level and experience. Add these steps to the Setup based on your chosen difficulty.

New Players:

- Do not deal any Restriction cards to players.
- If playing with **fewer than 8** players, flip one of the unused Optional cards face up onto the table.

Practiced:

- Shuffle the **Restriction** cards together and deal 1 to each player face-down. Each player **must** follow the rule on their private Restriction card for the rest of the game. Don't look at the card yet!

Expert:

- Shuffle the **Restriction** cards together and deal 1 to each player face-down. Each player **must** follow the rule on their private Restriction card for the rest of the game. Don't look at the card yet!
- Shuffle all of the **Minor Glitch** cards together and deal 1 face-up on the table. All players **must** follow the rules on the card for the rest of the game, including the Traitor if playing with the Hidden Traitor Variant.

Genius:

- Shuffle the **Restriction** cards together and deal 1 to each player face-down. Each player **must** follow the rule on their private Restriction card for the rest of the game. Don't look at the card yet!
- Shuffle all of the **Major Glitch** cards together and deal 1 face-up card on the table. All players **must** follow the rules on the card for the rest of the game, including the Traitor if playing with the Hidden Traitor Variant.

Step 5: Set the time

A) Set a timer on a phone, watch, or other handy time-keeping item based on the below table.

# of Players	2 Co-op Only	3 Co-op Only	4 Co-op Only	5	6	7	8	9 Potential Betrayer Only
Amount of Time	10	10	10	10	9	8	7	7

Step 6: Start play!

A) Players should now read their Restriction cards. Players must follow the rule on their private Restriction card for the rest of the game.

a) **Remember:** It is important that players never see the cards of any other player, either their Puzzle card or their Restriction card. Players are however, free to talk about any information except their puzzle letter.

B) If you have **fewer than 4** players, any Required Perspective cards not dealt should be face-down on the table. Flip them face-up now.

C) All players should now look at their Puzzle cards and state what puzzle number they have, to confirm everyone is playing the correct puzzle. Only the Puzzle Number should be read aloud, never tell the Letter of the card.

Jonathan has F01-C in his hand. He should say, "I have puzzle F01" or "I have family puzzle number one". He should never say, "I have F01 C" as that would give other players too much information.



D) Start the clock and solve the puzzle!



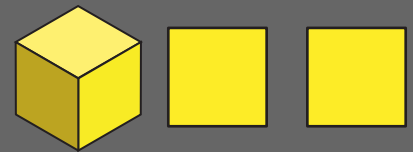
Squared Triangles

Since triangles may appear square or rectangular from certain perspectives, either shape is correct if turning a triangle on its side does not contradict the information on any players' cards.

Effectively, because a triangle laid on it's side will appear identical to a square from all four, 2D side views on the Required cards, there are certain puzzles in the game that can be solved with either a triangle turned on it's side **or** a square block. This solution is generally valid at lower player counts.

A square and a triangle on it's side appear identical from all 4 "side views".

Important: The Optional isometric grayscale cards provide additional information to players that may invalidate the "squared triangle" as a solution for a given puzzle by making it clear if a solution uses a triangle or a square. If any active player has a card that is contradicted by the structure built then players have lost. This means solutions using the "squared triangle" may be valid at lower player counts but **invalid** at higher ones. Remember, communication it critical before a vote is called!



Square Side Views



"Squared Triangle" Side Views

Mental Blocks: How to Play

If this is anyone's first time playing the game, or you want a quick refresher, the quick start guide on the back of the rulebook is a quick introduction on how to play!

Solving the Puzzle

Once the timer starts, there is no time to waste! All play is simultaneous; there are no turns and players are free to grab blocks and start building. A few things to keep in mind:

- Players may **never** show other players their cards, Perspective or Restriction cards.
- Players **must** follow any restrictions listed on their Restriction cards, and any rules listed on Major or Minor Glitch cards in play.
- Players are free to talk about what is on their Perspective and Restriction cards (except for the puzzle letter) and how they think the puzzle should be solved. **Open communication is key!**
- The hidden traitor may lie about anything. But be careful not to get caught!
- Players may change what other players have previously built and all pieces are freely available to be picked up and moved by **any player at any time** during the game.
- Play continues until someone feels the structure is complete and correct, and then a vote is called.
- Players may move around the table, unless a card specifically forbids it.

Calling a Vote

If at any time a player believes the team has solved the puzzle correctly, they may call a vote. Players must stop building the structure when a vote is called, but do not stop the timer. All players who agree the puzzle has been solved should raise their hands.

If the majority of players agree that the puzzle has been solved, stop the timer and check the results of the puzzle using the Traitor card as the Puzzle Answer Key.

In the case of a tie in the vote, or when the majority of players disagree that the puzzle has been solved, play continues until another vote is called.

Players win:

If they call a vote before time expires and the solution to the puzzle matches the structure built on the table exactly or is correct per the Squared Triangles solution.

Players lose:

The game is lost if time runs out or the solution did not match the structure built.

Hidden Traitor Variant



The job of the traitor is to cause everyone else to lose **without getting caught**. So, lying about what is on their card will be crucial. Sowing doubt about the motivations of other players is fair game. Convincing players incorrect block placements are correct is a viable strategy. Calling votes to halt the building is also ok.

The Traitor will act like any other builder, but their card will have the full solution to the puzzle on it.

The Hidden Traitor Variant follows all rules as a standard game with one addition; players may call to vote on the identity of the Traitor!

The Traitor lives by three rules:

- 1) They may not show their card to other players.
- 2) They must follow all rules on their private Restriction card and the Major or Minor Glitch card on the table (if playing at a higher difficulty).
- 3) They should not get caught!

Voting on the Identity of the Traitor

Players can ask for a vote at any time if they believe they know who the Traitor is, up to 10 seconds **after** the timer has run out. Players must stop building the structure when a vote is called, but do **not** stop the timer (it is still counting down). All players who agree that there should be a vote on the identity of the Traitor raise their hands.

In the case of a tie, or if the majority of players disagree that there should be a vote on the identity of the Traitor, play continues.

If the majority of players agree to a vote on the identity of the Traitor, then the player who called the vote should count down from 3 aloud (3, 2, 1, "point") and on point each player should point at the person they believe is the Traitor.

The traitor must then drop their hand, as their vote does not count.

The player who has the most players pointing at them is accused.

Players win:

- 1) By calling a vote where the solution matches the structure built.
- or
- 2) By calling a vote and correctly identifying the accused as the Traitor.

Traitor wins:

- 1) If time runs out.
- 2) The puzzle solution did not match the structure built.
- 3) An incorrect vote on the identity of the Traitor.
- 4) A tied vote on the identity of the Traitor.

Credits

Game Design: Micah Sawyer and Jonathan Gilmour

Game Development: Jonathan Gilmour

Product Development: Molly Wardlaw and Nathan McNair

Illustrations: Peter Wocken and Jason Kingsley

Graphic Design: Katie Khau and Peter Wocken

Rulebook Editing: Sarah Sharp and Nathan McNair

Jonathan Special Note: I'd like to thank my awesome family for helping to sort, organize, and assemble 30,000 foam blocks into prototype sets. Micah for letting me tag along on this awesome game design. My parents and Grandparents for inspiring my love of puzzles and solving things. The North West Ohio game designers' group for playtesting this a ton and supporting me. Ian for working on a billion cards during playtesting and everything else you do for me. All the play testers for being so awesome. Molly and Nathan for being so awesome. And you, reading this, for purchasing and playing this game and helping us spread fun!

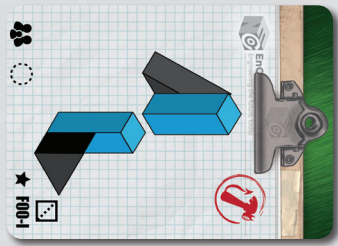
Micah Special Note: Thanks to my amazing, talented, beautiful and strong bride Kelly, we're doing this dang thing!

To Emmett and Aisley and the rest of my family for playing, throwing and occasionally chewing on my prototypes. To Robin at Root Inc, for working with me to make sure I can make games for both learning AND just for fun. To Jon for diving into this with me and for being a force for good in this industry. To NW Ohio game designers for playing this a ton and still looking forward to playing it more.

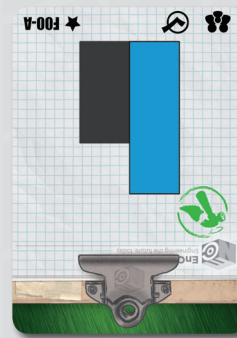
And finally, to Jesus for teaching me that I must be willing to try to understand other people's perspectives if I ever want to truly learn to love them.

Playtesters: Gene Abercrombie, Jean Abercrombie, Michael Addison, Sara Addison, Bob Albright, Grieg Allen, Erick Alton, Juan David Alzate, Chris Anderson, Trevor Arat, Daniel Rojas Arboleda, Johnny Archer, Theresa Archer, Courtney Armstrong, Arthur Atkinson, Dave Beever, Luke Bernhardt, Lynda Billard, Sarah Billard, Trevor Billard, Yvonne Billard, Alicia Blackstone, Daniel Blackstone, Bentley Blackstone, Dan Blim, Douglas Bohanan, Justin Bost, Robert Boyd, Alyson Browder, Quinn Brown, David Buehrer, Julián Bustamante, Mike Butz, Fedja Buz, Eric Cesare, Alex Childs, Curtis Clarke, Taryn Conley, Adam Crawford, Ana María Cuéllar, Michael D, Conor Davitt, Guy Evans, Jason Evans, Amy Fairhurst, Matt Fantastic, Kyle Fisher, Warren Fitzpatric, Jack Fleming, John Fleming, Raelin Fleming, Whitney Fleming, Heath Foster, Rachel Foster, Mike Gallegos, Jamie Gilmour, Jacob Gilmour, Anna Gilmour, Kaylee Gilmour, Jonah Gilmour, Tony Graham, Aiden Graham, Shane Grimes, Matthew Gruenwald, Jeff Gum, Ryan H, Stacey Hacon, Brian Hausrath, Kat Hausrath, Peter C. Hayward, Nathan Heaton, Andrew Hiener, Danielle Hower, Joshua Ingram, Anthony James, Adam Johnson, Addison Johnson, Stacey Johnson, Louise Jones, Kelsie Joyce, Kori Joyce, Nielson Jugalbot, Rob K, Mark Kale, Ian Keys, Luna Keys, Tony Kleinschroth, Jarrett Kohler, Josh Kreais, Carrie Lapidus, Henri Lapidus, Saul Lapidus, Yvette Lapidus, Doug Levandowski, Brian Lewis, Michael Lirot, Brian Long, Chad Long, Andrés Camilo López, John Luna, Jason M, Travis Magrum, Craig Malia, Devi, Mallini, Antonio Malloy, Marty Malloy-McCoy, Jessica Marchand, Kyle Marcum, Jenna Marion, Garrett Marks-Wilt, Amy Martin, Anna Martin, Emma Martin, Matthew Martin, Glenn Mason, Zach Molchany, Caitlyn Monaco, Maria Romasco Moore, Jason Morningstar, Ian Moss, Greg Mucchetti, Luke Muench, Omar Munoz, Jenn Nakhla, Alec Nelson, Katrina Newburn, Jeremiah Newton, Tara Newton, Jeff Nowak, Jerome Nowak, Jerry Nowak, Joe Nowak, Josh Nowak, Keith Partridge, Jessica Paxton, David Payne, Erika Pettite, Tamara Plota, Eric Poole, Brandon Posey, BJ Price, Hannah Price, Steven Putnam, Dan Radly, Andrew Ramirez, Evan Relf, Courtney Ringhiser, Robyn Roach, Claire Roadhouse, Simon Roadhouse, Erik Rollwage, Kassi Rose, Kaitlyn Rose, Rob Ross, Dave S, Alex Sawyers, Nick Schaufele, Niki Schifferdecker, Lisa Schmidtke, Jim Schoch, Nathan Schulte, Jake Schwartfigure, Valerie Schwartfigure, Jason Seifert, Morigan Shea, Ryan Sheehan, Jess Souder, Amos St. Louis, Josh Swartz, Amy Tate, Taylor Telford, Earl Tietsort, David Tome, Mariana Uribe, Troy VanGundy, Julia Vasquez, Isaac Villa, Susan Villa, Axel Wales, Wyatt Ward, Phil Weasley, Hayley Webster, Jack Webster, Brian Wenzel, Meghann Wenzel, Chris Wesson, Nathan Woll, Ben Wood, Ryan Z, Kelly Sawyer, Jason Smithers, Jess Smithers, Patrick Bronson, Angela Bronson, Aldo, Amy, Arthur, Blake, Bonnie, Chandler, Chris, Christian, Darren, David, Derek, Dianne, Donna, Ed, Eric, Erik, Georgi, Innes, James, Jamie, Jan, Jenna, Joanna, Joe, Josh, Lorie, Louise, Mads, Matt, Mokhtar, Natalia, Peter, Sara, Tim, Tony, Travis, Trevor, Vance

Quick Start Guide

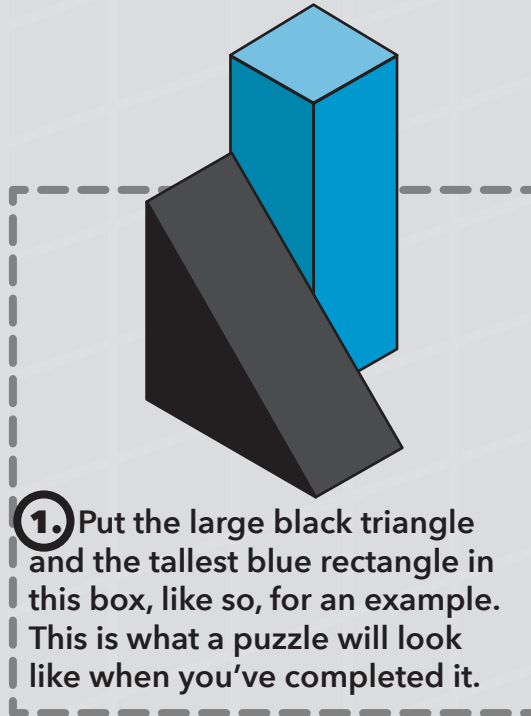
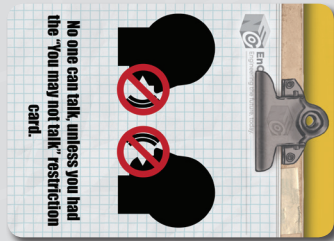


8. Win by calling a vote and correctly completing the puzzle before time runs out. Or identifying the traitor if playing with the hidden traitor variant.



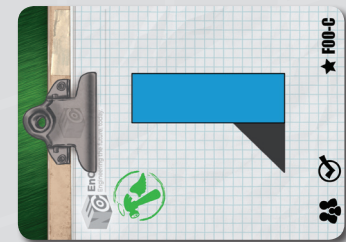
2. Each player will have a card with a unique view of the puzzle. Players will work together to build the puzzle from these views. You can say anything you want, (except your puzzle letter) but may not show your card to anyone else.

7. Major and Minor Glitches are cards that are placed face-up and have rules that must be followed by all players.

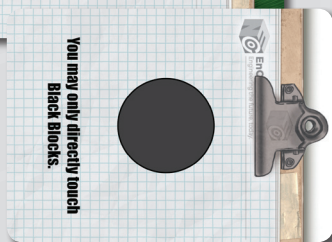
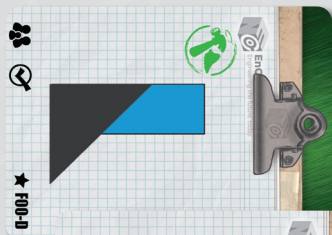


1. Put the large black triangle and the tallest blue rectangle in this box, like so, for an example. This is what a puzzle will look like when you've completed it.

3. Some of the cards have color, but you can't see depth to tell what is in front of what.



4. Some of the cards have depth, but no color.



6. Restriction cards limit what actions a player can take and must be followed at all times. These cards may also never be shown to other players but can be talked about.

5. Each card shows what the puzzle will look like from a single view. You might need to move around to find out where your view is from.

