

TableForge – Joke Book

A Spark & Anvil joke book. Groan-worthy puns, tricky riddles, silly nonsense, and real fun facts from the world of TableForge – read them out loud and make someone laugh.

Why did the six-sided die go to school?

It wanted to roll with a smarter crowd!

How to use this book

Read a joke, pause at the question, and try to guess the answer before you read on. Best of all: read them out loud to a friend, a grown-up, or your class. A good laugh makes the tricky stuff easier – that's real science.

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Puns

Why did the six-sided die go to school?

💡 It wanted to roll with a smarter crowd!

Why did the meeple refuse to leave the board?

💡 It said, "I've finally found my place!"

Why did the card deck break up with the shuffler?

💡 It said, "You keep mixing me up!"

What did the hex tile say to the square tile?

💡 "Stop being so cornered -- come hang out on six sides!"

Why was the rulebook so popular at parties?

💡 Because it always knew how to clear things up!

Why did the playtester bring a notebook to game night?

💡 Because every game deserves a second draft!

Why did the d20 think it was better than the d6?

💡 Because it had more sides to every argument!

What did the pawn say to the king?

💡 "I might be small, but I have a promotion in my future!"

Why did the board game designer go to therapy?

💡 Too many unresolved kingmaker problems!

Why was the victory point card so confident?

💡 It knew it would come out on top -- literally, at the end of the game!

What did the drafting card say when it was picked last?

💡 "I guess I'm an acquired taste!"

Why did the eurogame and the Ameritrash game stop hanging out?

💡 They couldn't agree on whose theme was better!

Why did the dice tower get promoted?

💡 It always rolled with the right people!

What did the loaded die say at the trial?

💡 "I swear, I'm not biased -- the numbers just like me more!"

Why did the first player always win?

💡 Because the game had a serious first-player advantage problem!

What did the playtester say to the broken combo?

💡 "You're game-breaking news!"

Why was the Monte Carlo simulation always so confident?

💡 It had run a million games and seen it all!

What did the point salad game say to the engine builder?

💡 "I've got points coming from everywhere -- want some?"

Why did the hand of cards get organized?

💡 Because hand management is the secret to victory!

Why did the game designer bring a calculator to playtesting?

💡 Because expected value waits for no one!

Riddles

I have six sides, equal chances on each face, and I get rolled all the time. What am I?

💡 A fair six-sided die! Each face has a $1/6$ chance of landing up.

You roll two six-sided dice and add them together. What sum is the most likely result?

💡 Seven! There are six ways to roll a 7 (1+6, 2+5, 3+4, 4+3, 5+2, 6+1), more than any other sum.

I'm a flat piece with art on top, I get drawn from a stack, and I usually have rules text. What am I?

💡 A card! Cards are one of the most flexible game components.

A deck has 40 cards: 10 red, 10 blue, 10 green, 10 yellow. What's the chance of drawing a red card on the first draw?

💡 $1/4$, or 25%! There are 10 red cards out of 40 total.

I let players move in six directions instead of four. What kind of board grid am I?

💡 A hex grid! Each hexagon has six neighbors, which is why strategy games like Catan use them.

When the same player keeps winning every playtest, what should the designer do?

💡 Adjust the game's balance! That might mean weakening a strategy, strengthening other paths, or adding catch-up mechanisms.

A small wooden figure shaped like a person, used to represent a player on the board. What is it called?

💡 A meeple! The word was coined by Alison Hansel in 2000, combining "my" and "people."

I'm a method where you run thousands of simulated games to find the average outcome. What technique am I?

💡 Monte Carlo simulation! Designers use it to check if a game is balanced before mass production.

If a card gives you 3 points on average per turn, and you play 10 turns, what's the expected total?

💡 30 points! Expected value times the number of trials gives the expected total.

In a four-player game, the player who goes first wins 35% of the time, the others win about 21% each. What problem does this game have?

💡 First-player advantage! A balanced game would have each player winning roughly 25%.

When a losing player can choose which of two leading players will win, but can't win themselves, what's that problem called?

💡 The kingmaker problem! It happens when an eliminated player still controls the outcome.

A game gives you points for collecting sets, building structures, fulfilling contracts, AND end-game bonuses. What's this scoring style called?

💡 Point salad! Many small scoring paths mixed together.

I have 52 cards and after a riffle shuffle, the cards are roughly mixed. How many shuffles does it take to truly randomize a deck?

💡 About 7 riffle shuffles! Mathematician Persi Diaconis proved this in 1992.

You roll a fair six-sided die. What's the expected value of the roll?

💡 3.5! Add $1+2+3+4+5+6 = 21$, then divide by 6 sides. The average is 3.5, even though you can never actually roll a 3.5.

Players take turns picking one card from a row of face-up cards, keeping their pick. What mechanic is this?

💡 Drafting! It rewards reading opponents and managing what's left.

A path-based board has 50 spaces from start to finish. A grid-based board is 10 wide by 10 tall. Which has more spaces?

💡 The grid! 10 times 10 equals 100, double the path's 50 spaces.

I'm a written guide that tells you how to play, lists components, and explains victory. What am I?

💡 A rulebook! Good rulebooks include examples, diagrams, and an index for quick lookup.

A game called "Steady Decline" has a clear winning strategy after 3 plays. What's missing from the design?

💡 Replayability! A well-designed game should have multiple viable strategies and feel different each time.

The first player gets 1 starting card, the second gets 2, the third gets 3, and the fourth gets 4. Why?

💡 To offset first-player advantage! Compensating later players for going later is a common balancing technique.

You play a game where you must always keep 5 cards in hand, choose carefully when to play them, and reshuffle the deck when it's empty. What mechanic dominates this game?

💡 Hand management! Deciding which cards to keep and which to play is the key skill.

Silly Stuff

A young designer made a game where the first player always wins on turn one. The playtesters refused to play more than once. The designer called this "extremely fast gameplay." Technically true.

Imagine a game balanced by rolling 1d100 every turn. On a 1, you lose. On a 100, you win. Anything else, nothing happens. Average game length: forever. Average fun: questionable.

A playtester said the rulebook was "perfectly clear." The designer was thrilled. Then they asked the playtester to explain rule 7. The playtester said, "I have no idea, I just didn't want to hurt your feelings."

In a world where meeples ruled, the wooden cube was a peasant, the meeple was middle class, and the painted miniature was royalty. The cardboard token wasn't invited to the meeting.

A designer ran 10,000 Monte Carlo simulations and discovered their game was perfectly balanced. Then a real human played it once, ignored all the optimal strategies, and had a great time. Math: 1. Vibes: 1. Tie game.

A kid invented a game with 47 different scoring ways. Their friend asked, "How do you win?" The kid replied, "By having the most points." Friend: "Which points?" Kid: "All of them. That's the salad."

A game's rulebook said "shuffle the deck thoroughly." A young player shuffled it for 45 minutes straight, refusing to start. They explained, "The rules said thoroughly. I take instructions seriously."

A designer made a hex-based board game where every hex was a different shape. The playtesters spent 20 minutes arguing about whether they were even playing a hex game. The designer called this "innovation."

A player rolled snake eyes (two 1s) seven times in a row. The probability of that is about 1 in 2.8 trillion. The designer asked to inspect the dice. The player just smiled mysteriously.

A board game had a single victory condition: "Be the best." The judges asked, "Best at what?" The designer said, "Exactly. That's the game." Nobody ever finished a single play session.

A designer thought first-player advantage wasn't a problem until they discovered that, in their game, going first guaranteed victory. They called the fix "Sit Wherever You Want, It's Fine." The fix did not work.

A kingmaker scenario erupted at game night. Player 3, with zero chance to win, had to choose between letting Player 1 or Player 2 win. They flipped a coin. Both winners and losers complained. The coin remained silent.

A drafting game where one player picked the wettest, soggiest cards every time still somehow won. When asked their strategy, they said, "I just pick what feels right." The math majors at the table needed to lie down.

A playtest ran for six hours without a winner. The designer wrote in their notes, "Game has emergent narrative depth." The players wrote in their notes, "Never coming back."

A game came with 400 wooden meeples in 12 different shapes. Setup took 45 minutes. Cleanup took an hour. The actual game lasted 15 minutes. Some people loved it. Most lost a meeple under the couch.

Fun Facts

Did you know? The word "meeple" was coined in the year 2000 by Alison Hansel during a game of Carcassonne. She combined "my" and "people" -- and the term stuck for tiny wooden figures everywhere!

Did you know? Mathematician Persi Diaconis proved in 1992 that it takes exactly 7 riffle shuffles to truly randomize a standard 52-card deck. Fewer shuffles leave patterns from the original order!

Did you know? When you roll two six-sided dice, a sum of 7 is the most likely result with 6 out of 36 combinations. That's why Monopoly's most-landed-on spaces are 7 spaces from "Go to Jail"!

Did you know? Monte Carlo simulation got its name from the famous casino in Monaco. Mathematicians in the 1940s used random sampling to solve problems and named it after the gambling city!

Did you know? The oldest known board game, Senet, is about 5,000 years old. Ancient Egyptians played it on a 3x10 grid with throwing sticks instead of dice. Even pharaohs were buried with copies!

Did you know? A standard six-sided die has the numbers arranged so opposite faces always add to 7. So 1 is opposite 6, 2 is opposite 5, and 3 is opposite 4. Designers chose this for visual balance!

Did you know? The hex grid used in many strategy games has a mathematical advantage: every neighbor is the same distance away. On a square grid, diagonal neighbors are farther than orthogonal ones!

Did you know? "Eurogame" describes games like Settlers of Catan with peaceful resource management, while "Ameritrash" describes games like Risk with conflict and player elimination. Both styles have passionate fans!

Did you know? The famous game designer Reiner Knizia has published over 700 games. He often uses point salad scoring -- many small ways to earn points -- to give players multiple winning strategies!

Did you know? A "playtest" is when a designer tests their game with real players to find bugs and balance issues. Most professional games go through hundreds of playtests before they reach store shelves!

Did you know? The expected value of rolling a single six-sided die is 3.5 -- but you can never actually roll a 3.5. Expected value is the long-run average, not what you'll see on any single roll!

Did you know? First-player advantage is so well-studied that some games give the second and third players bonus resources at the start to balance it. This is called "asymmetric setup."

Did you know? A good rulebook usually has a "quick reference card" -- a single page summarizing the key rules. Designers learned that even great rulebooks need cheat sheets for during play!

Did you know? Drafting in games like 7 Wonders and Magic: The Gathering teaches probability, decision-making, and "signaling" -- reading what cards others pass to figure out their strategy!

Did you know? The "kingmaker problem" is named after political kingmakers who couldn't become king themselves but chose who did. Game designers work hard to make sure losing players can still win, not just decide who wins!

Keep laughing

That's **70 jokes** from TableForge. Made someone laugh? Try making up your own – the best jokes are the ones you tell.

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