

Clear!

A game for 1 piecepack per player by David Hassell (DavidLHsl@aol.com)

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2+ players, approx. 5 minutes per round

Object: Score the most points after a predetermined number of rounds (7 rounds makes an excellent game). Object of each round is to be one of the first players to clear your card.

Introduction

This game is very similar to Bingo in the sense that each player possesses a “card,” which one marks based on a random element. In this case, you are attempting to remove coins based on the roll of 4 dice.

Note that use of terms *his* and *him* in these instructions is intended to be gender neutral.

Equipment

Each player requires:

- 6 piecepack tiles (doesn't matter which ones)
- 4 piecepack dice
- 24 coins from one piecepack (all 4 suits, null/2-5/ace each suit)
- opaque bag, cup, or other means of mixing 24 piecepack coins for random drawing

One player is designated the scorekeeper. That person needs:

- notepad and pencil, or some other scorekeeping mechanism
- an additional piecepack tile
- 3 pawns

Setup

Each player arranges his 6 piecepack tiles face-down in a 3 across by 2 down arrangement. This will create a board consisting of 24 smaller squares in a 6 across by 4 down grid. From this point forward, this will be referred to as a card in these rules.

Each player places his 4 piecepack dice near his card. From this point forward, these will simply be referred to as dice.

The scorekeeper places a separate tile face-down nearby. This is called the Scratch Tile. Place three pawn next to, but not on, this tile. This will be used by the scorekeeper to keep track of the number of consecutive scratch rounds (explained later). The scorekeeper also places the scorepad nearby.

At the beginning of each round of play, each player places his 24 piecepack coins into an opaque bag or container and mixes them. Blindly draw the coins one at a time and place them rank-side up on the card. This should be done left-to-right, top-to-bottom. When complete, the player's card will have all 24 coins placed 6 across and 4 down.

Designate by any agreeable means a player to roll first. This player will roll in the first round. The roller in the next round will pass to the next person to the left, clockwise, or other mutually agreed upon rotation.

Finally, determine the number of rounds that will be played to qualify as a complete game. Suggested number of rounds: 7.

Definitions

Line of x: x number of consecutive coins in a row, column, or diagonal. Empty squares do not obstruct a line of coins. For example, if two coins are separated by 3 empty squares; those coins are still considered a Line of 2, just as long as they are along the same column, row, or diagonal. The only lines in this game are Line of 2, Line of 3 and Line of 4.

Four: A player calls this if removing a Line of 4.

Scratch: A player calls this if unable to remove a Line.

Clear: A player calls this if his card no longer contains a Line of 3.

Scratch Round: If all players call Scratch, the round is announced by the scorekeeper as a Scratch Round.

Scratch Tile: Tile used by the scorekeeper to track number of consecutive Scratch Rounds.

Scratch-Off: After 3 consecutive Scratch Rounds, the scorekeeper announces a Scratch-Off.

How to Play

At the beginning of each round, each player sets up his card according to the instructions above in Setup. Also, determine the current round's roller as described in Setup.

The roller rolls his 4 dice and announces the result to all players. Each player may rotate his own dice to match the roll as a reference, or simply reference the roller's dice if the dice can be placed within view of all players.

Each player then examines his card and tries to find a Line of 3 or Line of 4 to remove. A Line of 4 consists of 4 consecutive coins in a row, column, or diagonal matching all 4 dice. The order of the coins in relation to the dice rolled does not have to match, but it is imperative that each coin corresponds to a different die.

For example, if the roll is ace/2/2/5; a player may remove a Line of 4 containing 2/ace/5/2, 2/2/ace/5, 5/2/ace/2, or any similar combination. Examples of invalid combinations include 2/ace/ace/5 (only one ace was rolled) and null/2/ace/5 (a null was not rolled).

If a player is able to remove a Line of 4, that player removes the four coins from the card and announces *Four!* The scorekeeper gives 2 points to each player calling Four.

If unable to remove a Line of 4, the player may attempt to remove a Line of 3. These are 3 consecutive coins in a row, column, or diagonal matching any 3 of the 4 dice rolled. Again, the order of the coins is not important. The important thing is that each coin corresponds of a different die.

For example, if the roll is ace/2/2/5; a player may remove a Line of 3 containing 2/ace/5, ace/2/2, 5/2/2, 2/5/ace, or any similar combination.

If a player is unable to remove a Line of 3 or a Line of 4, the player calls *Scratch!*

If a player's card contains several Lines of 4 and/or Lines of 3 matching the roll, the player may only select one Line to remove. Of course, the player should select a Line of 4 over a Line of 3 to score the 2 points. Once a player begins removing coins or announces Scratch, the player is committed to that choice. There is no time limit imposed on the players, but players should not spend too much time considering their move.

After removing any Line of 3 or Line of 4, a player announces *Clear!* if the player's card no longer contains at least 3 coins in a row, column, or diagonal anywhere on the card. After one or more players announce Clear, proceed to scoring.

Important reminder: coins separated by one or more empty spaces are still considered consecutive as long as they are on the same row, column, or diagonal.

Scratch Rounds and Scratch-Off

If all players announce Scratch, the scorekeeper places a pawn on the Scratch Tile to mark the Scratch Round. If there are 3 pawns on the tile after placing the pawn, the scorekeeper announces a Scratch-Off round. Otherwise, play continues.

All pawns are removed from the Scratch Tile if, during a subsequent round, at least one player is able to remove a Line of 3 or Line of 4. The purpose of the Scratch Tile is to determine when 3 consecutive Scratch Rounds occur. Once any player is able to remove coins, the number of consecutive rounds is reset to zero.

If the scorekeeper announces a Scratch-Off round, the scorekeeper removes all pawns from the Scratch Tile. The person who last rolled then rolls 2 dice and announces the result to all players. Only those 2 dice are considered. Each player then searches for a Line of 2 to remove. A player may still announce Clear if his card no longer contains a Line of 3 anywhere on the card after removing the Line of 2.

If all players still announce Scratch, or anyone declares Clear; proceed to scoring.

If at least one player can remove a Line of 2 and nobody declares Clear, play continues as normal with the next roller rolling 4 dice. Another 3 consecutive Scratch Rounds have to occur before having another Scratch-Off.

Scoring

Once one or more players declare Clear (Score Condition A), or the Scratch-Off still results in nobody able to remove coins (Score Condition B), the scorekeeper takes scores. After taking down the scores, the scorekeeper announces the number of rounds that have been played and each player's score, unless players choose to waive this announcement. Of course, the scorekeeper should make an announcement when the agreed number of rounds has occurred in order to declare a winner.

If there are more rounds to play, all players set up a new card, and the next round commences.

Score Condition A

Each player declaring Clear scores 10 points minus the number of coins still remaining on that player's card. For example, if a player announces Clear with 3 coins remaining, that player scores $10 - 3 = 7$ points.

If only one player is able to announce Clear, that player scores bonus points: 1 point for each coin on any other card of that player's choice. Of course, that player should select the card containing the most coins. These points are in addition to the points scored as described above.

Example: Mark is the only player to announce Clear in a 4 player game. Mark has 5 coins on his card, Mary has 6, Jack has 6 and Frank has 10. Mark scores 5 points for his card ($10 - 5 = 5$), and selects Frank's card to score his bonus of 10 points. Therefore, Mark has scored 15 points for the round, not including any points scored for removing Lines of 4 during play.

Score Condition B

This condition occurs if nobody is able to clear their card, and the Scratch-Off still produces a Scratch for all players.

In this case, each player with less than 10 coins remaining on his card scores 10 points minus the number of coins remaining on his card. It is entirely possible for nobody to score during the round (This occurs when all players still have 10+ coins on their respective cards.).

Version History

1.0.0 (07/04/2003): First draft submitted to piecepack.org.