

Dice's Zoo

For 2-4 (5) players, ages 6 and up, duration 15 minutes, author: Cang Mucun
This rule book is available for download at www.smiling-monster.de.

Overview

In Dice's Zoo you win, when you get rid of your dice first. Size and number seem to count ... but the real key to victory lies in your animals' abilities ... it's obvious: size does not matter (that much)!

Material

- 50 dice
- 1 bag
- 1 rulebook

Preparation

1. Randomly determine a starting player.
2. Put the 50 dice into the bag and shake thoroughly. Each player draws 12 dice from the bag. (If playing with 5 players, each draws 10 dice.)
3. Roll your dice and arrange them in front of you, grouped by the symbols that they show.
4. Leave some space in the center of the table to place the dice that are played.

Who succeeds to get rid of all his dice first ends the game and at the same time wins!

Sequence of play

Beginning with the starting player, the game progresses clockwise. Once it is your turn, you can take one of two actions, either place dice or re-roll dice:

Action: Place dice

This action has two steps, first place dice to the center area, then use the ability of the animal that you placed.

Place dice – The center area is empty

If there are no animals in the center area (for instance, at the start of the game), you can play any number of any one type of animal you like. At least one die must be placed and all dice placed must show the same type of animal. Traps must not be played to the center area.

Place dice – There are dice in the center area

If there are animals in the center area, you can play animals to replace the ones in the center area. Put the replaced dice back to the bag.

There are two ways to replace animals in the center area, either play more animals of the same type or play bigger animal than already present:

- a) Play more dice of the same type of animal!: To replace the dice in the center area, you can put more dice of the same type of animal to the center area than already present.

Example: There is one die in the center area, it shows an elephant. It is Mike's turn now. He has four dice that show an elephant. Mike places three of them to the center area, replacing the one that is already there. The replaced die is put back to the bag. Mike keeps his last elephant for a later turn.

- b) Play a bigger type of animal!: To replace the dice in the center area, you can put dice that show a bigger animal than already present. The number of dice that you place must be the same as the number of dice in the center area.

Example: There are two dice in the center area showing squirrels. It is Peter's turn. He replaces the squirrels with two of his dice that show bears. He puts the squirrels back to the bag. Next, it is Mike's turn. He puts two elephants to the center area. The bears are put into the bag. Then it is Rita's turn. She cannot place a bigger animal (elephants are the biggest type of animal in the game) and considers alternative actions.

Place dice – Use the animal ability

At the end of your turn, the ability of the type of animal that you placed takes effect. Irrespective of the number of dice that you placed the ability takes place just once.

Example: At the start of the game Peter puts three earthworms to the center area. He now can give away one of his other dice to any one player.

The ability of a type of animal must be used if possible. You cannot forgo to use the ability.

Example: Mike has four wild boars and no other dice. There are two wild boars in the center area. Mike now places all his wild boars to the center area. He cannot use the “exchange” ability of the wild boars, because he has no dice left to exchange one of his dice with another player. Mike ends the game and wins!

Types of animals and their abilities are explained later. There is a reference sheet for print out at the end of this rulebook.

Action: Re-roll

Instead of placing dice to the center area, you can choose to re-roll any number of your dice. At least one die must be re-rolled. Dice in the center area are not affected when you choose to re-roll your own dice.

Example: There are two elephants in the center area. It is Rita's turn. Currently, she has only two elephants herself and thus cannot place dice to the center area. She decides to re-roll all of her dice that show traps and also one of her two dice that show squirrels. Now it is Peter's turn. He has three elephants and could use them to replace the two in the center area. He decides to re-roll some of his other dice to be better prepared for coming turns.

The animals that you placed are still there at the start of your next turn

If the animals that you put to the center area your last turn are still there at the start of your next turn, then these are put to the bag and you start your turn with no animals in the center area (same as at start of the game). You can now place any number (at least 1) of dice, which show the same type of animal, to the center area. Alternatively, you can also re-roll any number (at least 1) of your dice.

Animal abilities

There are six different types of animals in the game. Each animal has a special ability that supports you in going out of dice first. There are also two other symbols, the trap and the X2-symbol

The ability of a type of animal takes always effect once, irrespective of how many dice you place to the center area. The ability takes effect, if possible. You cannot forgo the animal ability.

Elephant

The elephant is the biggest animal in the game.

It does not have an ability – it is simply the biggest animal around the zoo.

Each elephant scores 6 minus-points at the end of the game.

Bear

The bear is the second-biggest animal in the game.

Ability “Re-roll”: Re-roll one of your own dice or one die of another player. (Dice in the center area cannot be re-rolled using this ability.)

Each bear scores 5 minus-points at the end of the game.

Wild boar

the wild boar is the third-biggest animal in the game.

Ability “Swap”: Exchange one of your own dice with one die of any other player. (You cannot exchange dice with the center area using this ability)

If you get rid of all your dice by placing wild boars to the central area, then the wild boar's ability does not take effect. You win!

Each wild boar scores 4 minus-points at the end of the game.

Fox

The fox is the fourth-biggest animal in the game.

Ability „Remove“: Take one die from another player and put it into the bag. This ability can be used to weaken a combo of another player. (You cannot remove dice from the center area using this ability.)

Each fox scores 3 minus-points at the end of the game.

Squirrel

The squirrel is the fifth-biggest animal in the game

Ability “Add”: Choose another player. That player must draw a die from the bag. He rolls it and adds it to his own dice in front of him. (You cannot add a die to the center area using this ability).

Each squirrel scores 2 minus-points at the end of the game.

Earthworm

The earthworm is the smallest animal in the game.

Ability „Gift“: Choose one of your own dice and give it – unmodified, do not re-roll – to another player. That player adds it to his own dice in front of him. (You cannot choose a die from or put a die to the center area using this ability.)

If you play earthworms and have one die left, then you get rid of your last die using the earthworm ability. You win!

If you get rid of all of your dice by playing earthworms and have no die left to use the ability, then the ability does not take place. You win!

Each earthworm scores 1 minus-point at end of the game.

Trap

Traps are not animals (of course!) and cannot be put to the center area.

Traps do not come with an ability – they keep you away from winning.

Each trap scores zero minus-points at the end of the game

X2-symbol

When you choose the action “Place dice”, you can play any number of your X2-symbols in addition to the animal dice that you place.

Each X2-symbol that you place lets you use the animal's ability one more time.

Although elephants do not have an ability, it is allowed to play the X2-symbol together with one or more elephants.

It is allowed to play the X2-symbol even if the animal ability cannot be used as often as the X2-symbol allows to.

At the end of a player's turn, any X2-symbol (used or not) in the center area is put back to the bag.

Each X2-symbol scores 7 minus-points at the end of the game.

End of game – winning!

Once a player has no more dice left, the game ends. That player wins. Scores are calculated for the other players (as described in “Animal abilities”) to see who takes second (fewest minus-points), third, and last position (most minus-points).

Several rounds

You can agree to play several rounds until the score of a player reaches a limit. Who has the lowest score at that point wins. If there is a tie for first position then all the tied players win.

Alternative rules to replace dice

Instead of putting them to the bag, dice can be put to to box. Put them to the bag, when dice should be drawn from it and it is empty. Using this variant, replaced dice come back into play later and players cannot hope to draw dice from the bag that they just used for a strong move.

What do the dice show?

If a die shows an animal on one of its sides, then it shows the same animal on its opposite side, too. That is, if there is a fox on a die, then you can be pretty sure that there is a second fox on that die. If there is a trap, then there will be a trap on the opposite side of the die, in most of the cases, too. In a few cases, there will be a X2-symbol.

Thus, it is sufficient to have a look at three sides of any die to know which animals and options it offers to you.

When playing, do not waste time to find out, if there is a X2-symbol behind a trap. Use the abilities of your animals to win!

Name	Value	Ability
Elephant	6	No function
Bear	5	Re-roll one of your dice or another player's die.
Wild boar	4	Swap one of your dice with a die of another player.
Fox	3	Remove another player's die. Put it to the bag.
Squirrel	2	Another player must draw a die from the bag.
Earthworm	1	Give one of your own dice to another player.
Trap	0	Traps may not be placed in the center area.
X2	7	Use the ability of an animal one more time.

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