



PRESSURE MATRIX

FOR 2–5 PLAYERS, AGES 10 AND UP PLAYING TIME: 45 MINUTES

.OBJECT

In Pressure Matrix, each player races to survive the twists and turns of a far future game show, striving to trap the other runners and collect the most Credits!

.SET UP

Each player selects the runner and six Control Markers (▽) of the same color. A handful of Blackout Markers (■) should be placed nearby for ease of use. You start with 10 Credits (●), so place one of your Control Markers on the 10 space of the Score Track. Put a Blackout Marker on the **Pressure Level: Green** space of the Pressure Gauge (found on the Score Track). This marker will move as the game goes on, showing the current Pressure Level.

Shuffle the matrix tiles. Build the Matrix (the game board) by dealing the tiles from the top into a square. If there are two players, the square should have three tiles per side. If there are three or four players, the square should have four tiles per side. If there are five players, the square should have five tiles per side. Which way the tiles face does not matter.

Secretly put zero to five Blackout Markers in your hand. Once all players have done so, reveal the amounts chosen. The player with the most Blackout Markers goes first—but he loses that many Credits! Move his marker on the scoring track back one space for each marker bid!

COMPONENTS

- 50 Two-sided Matrix Tiles
- 5 Runners
- 3 Dice
- 30 Control Markers (6 of each color)
- 80 Blackout Markers
- Score Track

If there is a tie for highest bid, the tied players each roll three dice, with the high roll going first. Only the player who ends up going first loses the Credits bid.

Starting with the first player and going clockwise, each player puts his runner in the center of an unoccupied corner tile. If there are five players, one player must start on the center tile. Now, the pressure begins!

.PLAY

On your turn, you will normally take a Movement Phase, followed by a Pressure Phase. The first player starts.

MOVEMENT PHASE

Each turn, your movement is generated by rolling three dice and checking the pressure gauge. Choose the appropriate die based on the current Pressure Level. Move your runner that many tiles.

PRESSURE LEVEL RED

Use the highest die.

PRESSURE LEVEL YELLOW

Use the middle die. If two dice are tied, use the third die.

Example: Two 6s and one 1 are rolled, so the runner is moved one tile. If two 1s and one 6 are rolled, the runner is moved six tiles.

PRESSURE LEVEL GREEN

Use the lowest die.

If you roll triples, just use the number you rolled on any one of the dice.

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Movement is counted from one tile to another, with the runner landing in the middle of the tile. There is no diagonal movement. A runner cannot move through a single tile twice in one move, and cannot enter the tile it started from. Tiles with all nodes blacked out or with another runner already present are blocked and cannot be entered.

If you cannot move your full movement, you do not move at all. Discard one Control Marker, removing it from the game. Your turn ends, and the Pressure Level goes up by one (green to yellow or yellow to red). Skip the Pressure Phase.

Any Control Markers affecting movement must be spent before the dice are rolled. If the adjusted movement is zero or less, the runner stays where it is—but no Control Marker is lost. The runner is still considered to have moved, and takes a Pressure Phase where it is. He does not lose a Control Marker for not moving. Should a runner remain on a tile with all of its nodes blacked out, nothing happens.

If you rolled triples of any number and were able to move, the Pressure Level goes down one level at the end of the Movement Phase.

PRESSURE PHASE

After your runner has finished moving, pick a node without a Blackout Marker on the tile it landed on. Place a Blackout Marker on that node, and follow the instructions of that node. If this blacks out the last node of the tile, the Pressure Level goes to yellow once the Pressure Phase is complete.

Some terms on tiles have a special meaning:

WIN X

Gain Credits, moving your token up the Score Track this many spaces.



PAY X

Lose Credits, moving your token down the Score Track this many spaces, to a minimum of zero (there are no negative credits).



GIVE X

Move your token down the Score Track and another player's token up the Score Track this many spaces. You choose which player to give to.



STEAL X

Move your token up the Score Track and another player's token down the Score Track this many spaces. You choose which player to steal from.



FLIP

Select a tile in the matrix with no runner. Discard all Blackout Markers on the tile and return any Control Markers on it to their owners. Then, flip it to its reverse side. This ends the Pressure Phase. If a node indicates to flip a tile with a runner on it, the runner remains on that tile, but does not black out a node on the new side.



INVERT

Select a tile in the matrix with one, two, or three Blackout Markers. Remove the Blackout Markers on it and place Blackout Markers on the nodes that were vacant. If the tile is vacant or all nodes are blacked out, nothing happens.



TELEPORT

Move a runner to any tile in the matrix that is not completely blacked out or occupied. If this is the Active player's runner, begin a new Pressure Phase at that tile.



DISCARD

Remove the indicated Control Marker from the game. If none is indicated you must discard one of your Control Markers from the Matrix or from your hand.



RECLAIM

Return one of your Control Markers anywhere on the board to your collection. If there are none of your Control Markers in the Matrix, you may reclaim a discarded one.



▽ SPECIAL

These are special nodes that produce various effects later in play. Even if an effect on a special node seems to go against the rules, do what it says. See below for more information.



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EXAMPLE OF PLAY

This game is reaching the final rounds. Blue is nearly frozen and Yellow and Green are almost out of space to move. Assuming the Pressure Level is Yellow, if Green, Yellow or Red threw this die roll, they could still move the full movement of four. Red actually has two movement options, while Green and Yellow each only have one. With anything larger than a four, these runners would be frozen as well.

It's anyone's guess how this contest will end.

RED
(HIGH)

YELLOW

GREEN
(LOW)



PRESSURE MATRIX



SYMBOL LEGEND



=

CREDIT(S)



=

CONTROL MARKER(S)



=

BLACKOUT MARKER(S)

KEEPING CONTROL

If a node has a ▽ symbol on it and you have any Control Markers in front of you, you must place a Control Marker on the symbol after you place the Blackout Marker, replacing any other player's Control marker there (return it to its owner). Placing a Control Marker does not activate the effect on the node. At any point later in the game when you meet the condition described in the node, you may reclaim that Control Marker (returning it to your hand) to use the effect on that node immediately.

You can never use other players' control markers or have them in your collection.

After your Pressure Phase ends, the player to your left takes a turn.

VICTORY IN THE MATRIX

If you have no Control Markers in your hand before you would roll dice to move, you are frozen. If you somehow regain any Control Markers before you would roll dice, you get to play as normal... until you run out again! For example, you might reclaim a Control marker on the board to use a Control effect that works when you are

“frozen,” or to use a Control effect that works “before rolling.” Otherwise, the game ends immediately.

When the game ends, all runners gain 1 🪙 for each Control Marker they still have in hand. Then, the runner with the most Credits wins! In the case of a tie, the player with the most Control Markers remaining breaks the tie. If there is still a tie, the game ends in a draw. The contestants are invited back next week to compete again in the Pressure Matrix.

OFFICIAL REGULATIONS

- If two or more effects would happen at the same time, such as two players using Control Markers at the same time, the Active (current) player chooses the order.
- Ties are broken with a die roll. The highest roller chooses the result.
- Scores can never go below zero Credits. Numbers less than zero, such as adjusted movements, are zero.
- Two runners may never occupy the same tile.
- If a tile ever moves for any reason, any Runner or Markers on the tile move with it.
- There is no limit to the number of Blackout Markers in the game. Any that are removed from the Matrix are returned to the general pool.
- When giving or stealing Credits, the runner must give or steal the full value specified to the other runners involved. If that is not possible, give or steal all that remain. If multiple players are being given Credits and the giving player does not have enough Credits to give the full value to everyone, he decides how they are divided.

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SPECIAL THANKS

Thanks to Sharon Cichelli for patiently listening to endless rants about game mechanics and certain popular American board games for children.

Leif, for input and for saying, “I’d actually buy this game.” Not for this game, but a different one. Still, it gave me the confidence to start submitting games to companies.

Ben Gibbs, for always being willing to playtest my games far beyond the breaking point, and for clever ideas.

Marcelo Figueiroa, for introducing Sharon and me to Gamer High, keeping us in the loop for years, and putting me in touch with AEG.

The Board Game Designers' Forum, for continuous community and inspiration.

DEDICATIONS

Jonathan would like to dedicate this game to the fine folks at AEG for making his long-held goal of getting published a reality. Thank you!