

# Zugzwang

*Chess for People who Hate Chess*

## Overview

Zugzwang is a chess inspired game with a twist. Instead of rival sets of black and white pieces, players share a communal set of dice with different colors and ranks on their faces. The rank and color of each die changes with which direction it is viewed from. Players draw sets of objective cards and rotate the board to capture dice that match their cards' combinations. When all legal captures are exhausted, the player with the most combinations that match their cards wins.

## Objective

Capture dice that correspond to the combinations specified on objective cards to score points. The player with the most points wins.

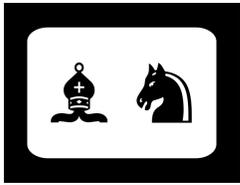
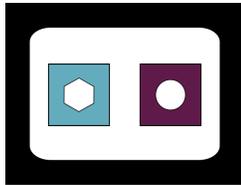
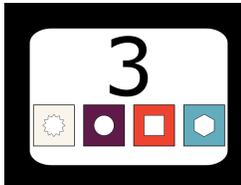
## Setup

Place the turntable between both players and place the board on top of it.

Roll the 16 dice simultaneously onto the board. Any dice that roll off of the board should be rolled onto the board again. Adjust the dice so each die has its own square and its sides are lined up with the four edges of the board. Whether the icons on the dice are sideways or upside down has no effect on gameplay. The colors of the dice do not have to correspond with the edges of the board. Each edge of the board should only have a few dice of that edge's color facing it with the majority of the dice showing other colors.

Shuffle the deck of objective cards into a pile and place it face down between both players. Each player draws three initial objective cards and keeps them hidden from the other player. Objective cards come in four varieties: rank, color, target, and variety.

Rank	Color	Target	Variety
Make pairs with the specified ranks. Color does not matter.	Make pairs with the specified colors. Rank does not matter.	Capture a die with a specific combination of color and rank. Both have to be satisfied to score.	Score one point for every set of three different colors or three different ranks.

Example Objective Cards			
Rank	Color	Target	Variety
			
<i>Score one point for every pair of bishops and knights you capture</i>	<i>Score one point for every pair of blue and purple dice you capture</i>	<i>Score one point for every blue knight you capture.</i>	<i>Score one point for every combination of three different colors. Ranks do not matter.</i>

A single die can be used to score multiple cards, but a die can only be used once on a given card. Having a knight and two bishops would only score one point on the example rank objective card above. Having two blue dice and two purple dice would score two points on the example color objective card. Those same four dice would not score any points on the example variety card, resulting in a one point penalty. See “Scoring” for a more detailed example.

## Gameplay

Select a player to go first at random.

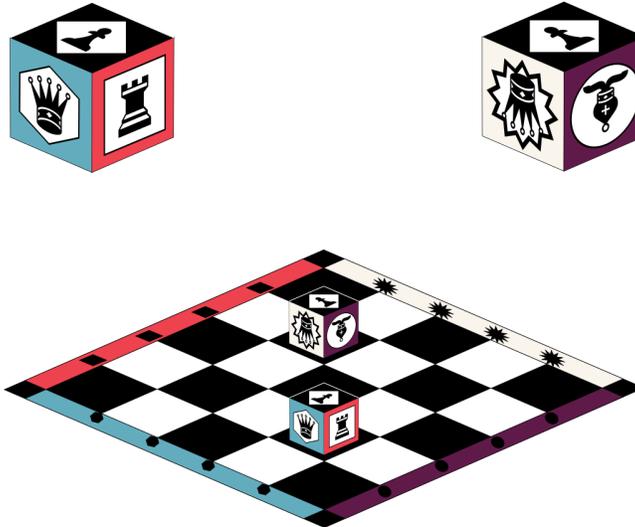
The active player starts their turn by drawing an objective card. They may then choose to discard up to one card from their hand. They can discard the card they just drew or one of their other objective cards. Alternatively, they can choose to discard no cards this turn. Having more cards in hand gives more opportunities to score points. However, any card a player fails to score at least one point on at the end of the game is a one point penalty.

Next, the active player should rotate the board to consider possible moves from all sides before *capturing* a die. The active player moves one die whose color matches the edge of the board it is facing following the standard chess rules for the rank on that face of the die. That die is moved to a space occupied by another die whose face is a different color. The active player then removes the second die, placing it next to them with the face that die was captured as facing up. In Zugzwang, every move has to result in a capture and dice cannot capture dice of the same color.

In summary, on their turn a player must draw one card, discard up to one card, and then must attempt to make a capture. Once the active player completes their turn, play alternates between players until there are no legal captures remaining. If a player cannot legally capture a die after drawing and discarding objective cards, the game is over (see “Ending the Game” and “Scoring”).

## Example of Capturing

Consider the following simplified board with two dice:



The top of this die is a black pawn. Pawns can be captured, but never moved. Whenever a pawn is captured, ***the player rolls the die and captures it as whatever side ends up on top***. If the roll results in a pawn, the die is rerolled until a different rank is showing. This die's pawn is not facing the edges of the board, so it cannot be captured as a pawn.

This die has a blue queen facing the blue edge of the board. It can capture the other die by moving diagonally, at which point the active player will have captured a cream colored queen



This side is a red rook facing the purple edge of the board. Since it is not a purple face, this means the rook could be captured by dice with purple sides facing the purple edge. For example, the other die's purple bishop could capture this die, giving the active player a red rook.

The active player could use the blue queen to capture the cream colored queen, or could use the purple bishop to capture the red rook. When captured, they should place the die next to them with the captured side (cream colored queen or red rook) facing up.

## Ending the Game

After drawing and discarding objective cards, if a player has no legal captures left they should look to see the number of dice that each player has. If a player has no legal captures and they have the same number of dice as the other player, then the game is over.

If the active player has no legal captures but has fewer captured dice than the other player, the active player chooses a die to take from the board for free. The color and rank of the captured die is the side that was facing up on the board. If a pawn was facing up, the active player rolls the die until a different rank is facing up and takes the die. The game is then over, even if the removed die opens up new captures for the other player.

The total number of dice a player will be able to capture in a given game is not fixed, but both players will capture the same total number of dice.

## Scoring

When the game is over, both players reveal their objective cards. A player scores one point for each combination they can make with their dice that matches the combination on the card. A single die can be used to score multiple cards, but a die can only score any given card once.

For example, if a player captured the following dice during the game:



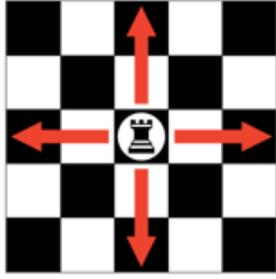
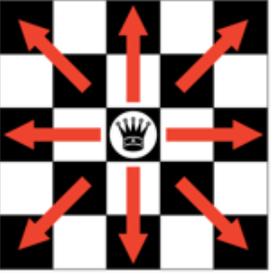
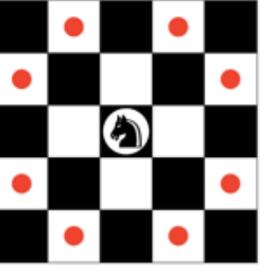
They would score 5 points with these objective cards as follows:

<p>Two unique combinations of bishop and knight. <b>2 Points</b></p>	<p>One unique combination of purple and blue. While there is an extra blue die, there is no extra purple one to go with it. <b>1 Point</b></p>	<p>One blue knight. While there is another blue die and another knight, there is only one die that is both blue and a knight. <b>1 Point</b></p>	<p>One combination of three different colors. There is one blue die leftover, but there are no other dice for it to combo with. <b>1 Point</b></p>

For each objective card in a player's hand that they cannot score at least one point off of, they lose a point instead.

The winner is the player with the most points. In the event of a tie, the player who went second wins.

## Appendix A: How Chess Pieces Move

			
<p>The rook moves any number of squares up and down or left and right. It cannot jump over other pieces.</p>	<p>The bishop moves any number of spaces diagonally. It cannot jump over any other pieces.</p>	<p>The queen combines the moves of the rook and the bishop. It can move any number of spaces diagonally or up/down or left/right, but it cannot jump over other pieces.</p>	<p>The knight moves in an L shape, two squares up/down and then one square left/right OR two squares left/right and then one square up/down. It <b>can</b> jump over other pieces</p>

Pawns (♙) do not move. Their color is black and there is no matching black edge of the board. However, they can be captured. When a pawn is taken, the active player rolls the captured die until a side with a different rank is shown. The die is captured as that rank and color.

## Appendix B - Variant Gameplay *Fixed Zugzwang*

In this challenge mode, the board and dice are set up as normal but no objective cards are used. Instead, players arrange themselves so they can only see one side of the board. This means they can only see the tops of the dice and the sides of the dice facing them. Players are not allowed to move the board or themselves to see the other faces. However, players can infer the other faces of a die from this limited information. ***For a given die, queen is always opposite knight, rook is always opposite bishop, purple is always opposite red, and blue is always opposite cream.*** Players are allowed to capture using the other faces as in normal Zugzwang provided they can infer a legal move on the unseen sides.

When capturing, players should announce the color and rank of the capturing die and of the captured die, indicating the dice with their fingers. The opposing player then has an opportunity to challenge the move. If they challenge, the sides of the capturing and captured dice are revealed. If the revealed sides match the active player's description, the challenging player loses the game. If the sides do not match the active player's description, then the active player loses the game. If the move is not challenged, then play proceeds to the other player. If an unchallenged capture was incorrectly described by the active player, the active player still takes the die. Play continues as normal, even if this produces what would otherwise be an illegal move (such as a die capturing a die of the same color).

When a player believes that all legal moves have been exhausted, they must declare it to end the game. The other player then has a chance to challenge that all legal moves have been exhausted. The challenging player declares what they believe to be a remaining legal move, indicating the colors and ranks of the involved dice. The sides of the dice are then revealed. If the dice could have made the legal capture described by the challenging player, then the challenging player wins. If the color and ranks of the dice do not exactly match the description of the challenging player, then the active player wins.

If the dice could have made a different legal capture than the one the challenging player described or if the challenging player described an illegal capture, the active player wins.

### **Appendix C - Variant Gameplay Cooperative Zugzwang**

In cooperative Zugzwang, the dice and board are set up as normal. Five objective cards are then revealed at random from the top of the deck. The objective is for the players to collectively capture dice to fulfill all of the cards simultaneously in less than five minutes. However, in cooperative mode, each die can only be used to score a single card.

Up to four players should take up positions around different edges of the board. Players cannot freely rotate the board. Instead, on their turn the active player may rotate the board once 90 degrees in either direction. Once they do so, they must make a capture from the side currently facing them. After making a capture, the active player should place the captured die on a card it contributes towards. Players may be forced to capture dice that do not contribute to any card, but remember that any captured pawns can be rolled into something that is potentially useful. As more dice are captured, dice may be freely moved between cards. After each capture, play proceeds clockwise. The players collectively win when all of the objective cards are satisfied or collectively lose when the five minutes have expired or no legal captures remain.

Players should not look at the other sides of the board. Instead they should rely upon communication with their teammates and logical inference to determine what pieces they can capture, what pieces they should avoid taking, and when and how they should rotate the board. Even from a fixed vantage point a player can infer the colors and ranks of the other faces of the dice (see Appendix B: Fixed Zugzwang).