

# PYRAMIDS

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A game of ancient construction by Bradley C Buchanan.  
For two players. Ages 12 and up.  
Playtime: 30-45 minutes.

## OBJECTIVE

The object of the game is to be the first player to finish building your pyramid. Your pyramid is built with resources gathered in the Nile Valley. The more land you purchase in the valley, the more resources you can gather, and the faster you will build your pyramid!

## MATERIALS

You will need three six-sided dice, one red, one green, and one blue. You will also need a copy of the board, and a different color of pen or pencil for each player. It is helpful, but not necessary, to have additional dice on hand. If red, green, and blue dice are unavailable, any three colors will work. Just make sure to label the board accordingly.

## SETUP

The first thing to do is number the *discovery properties* on the game board. The number you give to a discovery will determine its effect during the game. See the board for the complete list.

Starting with the youngest player, players should take turns removing discoveries from the game until six remain. Then the numbers for those six should be written into the discovery spaces in the valley.

*Note: For a more aggressive game, have players take turns selecting discoveries for the board instead of removing them. For a different experience, try adding more than one of a discovery.*

## INITIAL PURCHASES

At the beginning of the game each player gets to purchase seven coin worth of land in the valley. (Land value is determined by row, and is indicated at the far end of each row on the board.) Again starting with the youngest player, take turns making purchases until each player has purchased seven coin worth of land. When you purchase land, outline it in your color.

When both players have made their initial purchases, the last player to make a purchase rolls first.

## HOW TO PLAY

On your turn, roll the three colored dice. Their result will tell you what resources you have to spend this turn. For each die, look at the corresponding column in the valley. If you have bought any land in that column you may gather resources from it (or in a few cases you may take a special action). Once you have determined what resources you gathered, you may spend those resources to purchase new land and/or build your pyramid.

## GATHERING RESOURCES

There are four kinds of resources: Wheat, Slaves, Bricks and Coins.

- Wheat (generated by your green die) can buy Slaves.
- Slaves (generated by your blue die) can buy Bricks.
- Bricks (generated by your red die) can buy Wheat.
- Coins are a wildcard resource, and may be used in place of Wheat, Slaves or Bricks, anywhere in the game.

When you are counting resources, simply count the number of properties for that resource you have purchased in the selected column. That is your resource count for this turn.

If you rolled doubles (two of your dice match) you gain one coin this turn in addition to any resources gathered. If you rolled three-of-a-kind you gain three coins.

## BUYING LAND

Once you know your resources, you may purchase land.

- Land in the red area is bought with Bricks and Coins.
- Land in the green area is bought with Wheat and Coins.
- Land in the blue area is bought with Slaves and Coins.

The price of land varies by row. The nearest row costs one resource, the next costs two, and the middle row costs three. Prices decrease again as you approach your opponent's side.

When buying land, you must buy the land on your edge of the valley before buying land above it in the second row; that is, floating purchases are not allowed. You have to build up from your edge.

Any resources you do not spend are lost at the end of your turn.

## BUILDING YOUR PYRAMID

When you begin to get more resources on a turn, you will want to buy a piece of your pyramid. Pyramid pieces require Wheat and

Slaves and Bricks to buy (Coins may be used in place of any resource). The lowest pieces on the pyramid (1/1/1) require one of each resource to buy. The top piece (4/4/4) requires four of each resource.

## PYRAMID BONUSES

When you finish an entire row of your pyramid, you gain a permanent bonus.

- Row 1: Gain 1 extra coin every turn.
- Row 2: When rolling doubles you get two extra coins instead of one. Three-of-a-kind will grant six coins instead of three.
- Row 3: When rolling doubles you get three extra coins instead of two. Three-of-a-kind will grant nine coins instead of six.

## THE STOREHOUSE

If you gather resources but are unable or unwilling to buy anything (because you cannot afford it or there is nothing left to buy) you may lightly fill in a square in your Storehouse instead. On a future turn you may put an X through a filled box to add a coin to your resources. You may redeem multiple filled storehouse boxes in one turn. But be warned – you only get six for the entire game.

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

Some spaces on the board do not grant resources, but instead give you a special ability if they are rolled on your turn.

- **Bump:** This bonus takes effect before any others and before you gather resources. You may add or subtract 1 from any die, including the one that rolled Bump. This effect is stackable.
- **Discovery:** Take the special action corresponding to the assigned number (see Setup).
- **Double:** Double the output of a single die. If two are gained in one turn, this effect cannot be stacked on a single die.
- **Extra:** Pick a color (red, green, or blue) and roll an extra die of that color.

## GAME OVER

The game ends when one player finishes buying all of their pyramid pieces. Congratulate them, frame the board and hang in on their wall!