Gridlock

Boston

A Game by Justin Richer

About the Game

Gridlock: Boston is a game about driving around in the city, where none of the roads make sense and everything is constantly under construction. Your goal is to get to your set of randomly-selected destinations before the other players get to theirs, using a road network that is built and changed by everyone during the game. Any player can drive on, build, or change any piece of road, regardless of which player placed it initially. Be careful, a route that you placed could end up helping your opponents more than you!

Can you make it to all your stops before anyone else?

http://gridlock.info/

2-4 Players   Age 8+   30-45min

bspk
Bespoke Games

The Board

The board is laid out like the city of Boston, if Boston had been built on a compact hexagonal grid instead of a meandering pile of cow paths. All locations on the board, including destinations, parks, and the river, roughly correlate to their real-life locations in and around the city. All gameplay takes place on the board, where players will build out and drive on a road network.
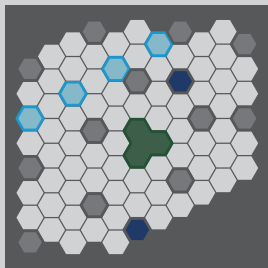
Spaces

The **type** of each space on the board determines what can be done in that space.

Destination spaces mark where players are trying to visit during the game. A player may drive through any destination space if they choose but they only get a point if they stop in that space.

Tunnel spaces are roads that connect directly to each other, skipping any intervening spaces. Players can enter and exit any tunnel entrance as long as it is connected to a road.

Empty spaces can contain intersection tiles placed by the players during a build phase. Players cannot drive on an empty space until it has a road built on it.
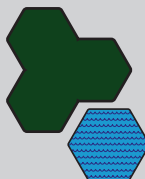
Obstacle spaces, such as *parks* and *rivers*, cannot be built on or driven through. Roads can contact them at their edges, but the road stops at the obstacle space.

Likewise, players cannot build on or drive off the edge of the board.

Game Pieces

Intersection tiles let all the players build out the road network. Each tile has between one and six roads that connect to adjacent intersection tiles and destination spaces. Note that intersection tiles with rotaries function identically to non-rotary intersection tiles. There are 64 intersection tiles in the game, and they are shared by all players. See the sections on **placing intersection tiles** and **driving** for more details.
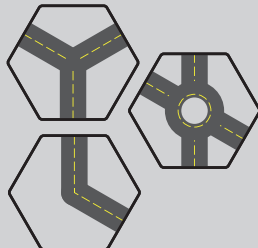
Cars are used by players to move about the board. Each player has one car in their color. Cars can drive along connected roads, through tunnels, and through destination spaces. Cars cannot drive through any of the obstacle spaces on the board, such as parks or waterways. See the section on **driving** for more details.
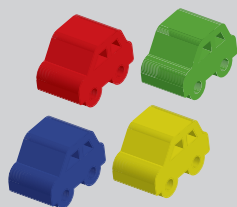
Marker cubes are used by players to mark destinations that they have visited during their travels. Each player has six cubes in their color.
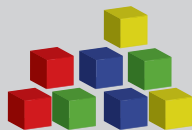
Construction cones are placed on the board to designate a Construction Zone. There are two construction cones in the game, and they are shared by all players. See the section on Construction Zones for more details.
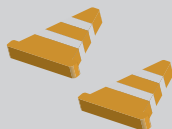
Destination cards tell the players where they start on the board and which destinations they will try to get to during the game. The name of the destination and its position on the game board are marked on the face of the card. Each player has their own deck of twelve cards, marked with their color on the back.
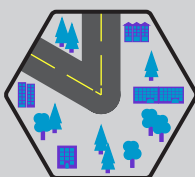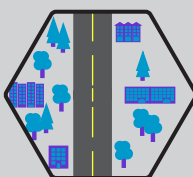
Fenway Park
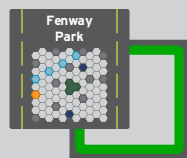
Intersection Tiles

There are **16** different kinds of intersection tiles included in the game in the following amounts, for a total of **64** tiles all together.
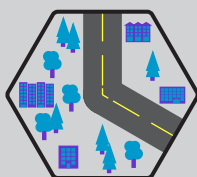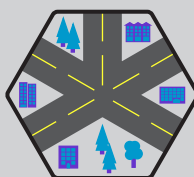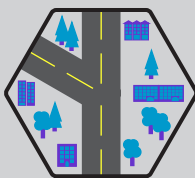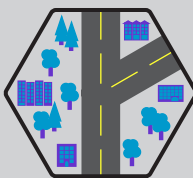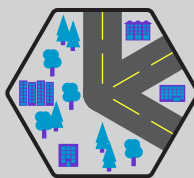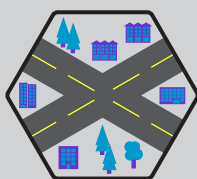

x 8

x 4

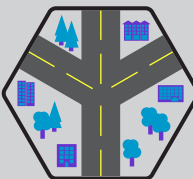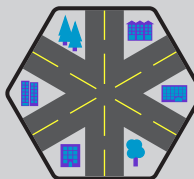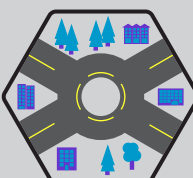x 6

x 4

x 4

x 6

x 6

x 4

x 6

x 4

x 4

x 2

x 1

x 2

x 2

x 1

Setup

All intersection tiles are shuffled together and placed in one or more piles face down next to the board. These are shared by all players during the game.

All players take the pieces in their color: one car, six marker cubes, and a deck of twelve destination cards.

The players then determine their *starting location*.

Each player shuffles their own destination deck.

All players reveal the first card from their deck. If all revealed cards are different from each other, play begins with the *First Turn*, below.

However, if two or more players draw the same card, the players who matched shuffle that card back into their deck and draw a new one. If a newly-drawn card matches an already-showing card, the newly-drawn card is shuffled back into the deck and a new card is drawn again, but the player who had previously drawn the card does not need to choose a new one. This algorithm continues until all players have distinct cards showing, and play continues with the *First Turn*, below.

First Turn

Each player places their car and one marker cube on the location indicated by the card drawn in the *Setup* phase.

All players draw five additional cards and hold them secret from the other players. These cards are the destinations that each player will attempt to visit during the game. The remaining destination cards are set aside and not used.

All players draw two intersection tiles from the stack and keep them hidden from other players.

Whichever player gets their tile down onto a space on the board is the first player. There are no additional rules, just like at a real intersection.

The first player places one of their intersection tiles on any available space on the board and draws back up to two intersection tiles. Play continues in a clockwise fashion around the table for the rest of the game.

Once all players have placed their first intersection tile, *gameplay* commences as below.

Gameplay

On each turn, a player can either *Build* or *Drive*, but not both. The type of turn is declared by the player at the beginning of their turn before any actions are taken. Once an action is taken, the type of turn cannot be changed.

Building

During a *Build* turn, the player modifies the board by taking up to *four* actions of any of the following five categories, in any combination and order:

- *Place* an intersection tile on any open place on the board using one of the intersection tiles in their hand. The intersection tile can be placed in any orientation on the grid and need not connect to any existing roadways. See the section on placing intersection tiles for details.

- *Rotate* any existing intersection tile, unless it is in a Construction Zone. The intersection tile can be rotated any amount and need not connect to any other roadways when rotation is complete.

- *Remove* any intersection tile, unless it is in a Construction Zone or has a car on it. The removed intersection is placed face up next to the board in a discard pile.

- *Set up* a Construction Zone by placing one of the construction cones onto a space. See the section on *Construction Zones* for details.

- *Clear* a construction cone from its space on the board. The Construction Zone's restrictions are deactivated immediately and the cone is placed next to the board.

A player does not need to take all four of their actions.

At the end of their turn, the player draws back up to two intersection tiles in their hand. Note that this means that a player can only build at most two roads in a given turn. If at any time there are not enough intersection tiles in the draw piles, shuffle the removed intersection tiles and place them face down next to the board to form new draw piles.

Driving

During a *Drive* turn, the player moves their car around the board using the roadways, stopping up to *two* times. The drive begins from the car's current location and continues along any number of connected intersection tiles and destination spaces. Intersection tiles connect only on the sides that have road segments on them, while destination spaces connect on all available sides. All sides of an intersection tile connect to all other sides of that tile.
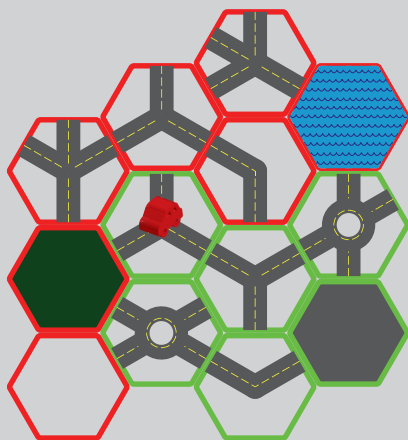
Tunnel spaces may be entered only via their marked roads, and all tunnel spaces connect directly to each other allowing a player to bypass all intervening spaces while in the tunnel. Players cannot drive through spaces containing water or parks, and players cannot drive off the edge of the board or through a non-connected side of a tunnel space.

Players may drive as far along the contiguous roads as they wish and stop at any space along their journey. If the car's path crosses a construction cone, the player is forced to stop at the cone.

If the player stops in a destination that they hold a card for, it is scored as follows:

- The player places a marker cube on the destination space.

- The player places their matching destination card face-up in front of them.

Ending the Game

The game ends when one player reaches all of their goals, the first player to do so is declared the winner. The other players may play one last turn just to see how far they could have gotten, but this has no effect on the winner of the game.

Action Details

Most of the actions that players can take within the game are affected by the current state of the game board. This section provides some detail on how these actions work.

Placing an Intersection
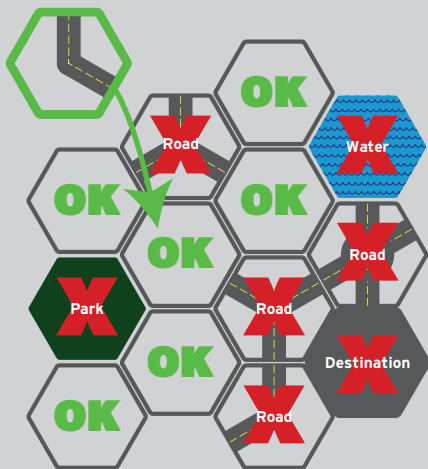
Intersection tiles may be placed on any empty space on the board in any orientation, as long as it's still aligned with the hex grid. Intersection tiles may not be placed on destinations, water, parks, tunnels, or spaces that already contain an intersection tile.

To replace an intersection tile with another one, the original intersection tile must be removed first.

The roads of a newly placed intersection tile need not align with or connect to any existing roads or other spaces.

Rotating or Removing an Intersection

Intersection tiles may be rotated any amount as long as the tile still aligns with the board's hexagonal grid. The roads do not need to connect to anything after rotation. Intersection tiles may be rotated even if there is a car parked on them, but not if they are in an active Construction Zone (see section on Construction Zones).

Intersection tiles may be removed from the board by any player during their build turn. An intersection tile that is removed is placed beside the game face-up in a discard pile. A tile may not be removed if it has a car on it or it is in an active Construction Zone (see section on Construction Zones).

A player can rotate or remove any intersection tile regardless of who originally placed that tile onto the board.

Construction Zones

A Construction Zone affects the space in which a construction cone has been placed and all spaces immediately around it. Building is restricted inside the Construction Zone:

- New intersection tiles may be placed within an empty space in the Construction Zone, in any orientation.

- Existing tiles may not be rotated within the Construction Zone.

- Existing tiles may not be removed from the Construction Zone.

Destination
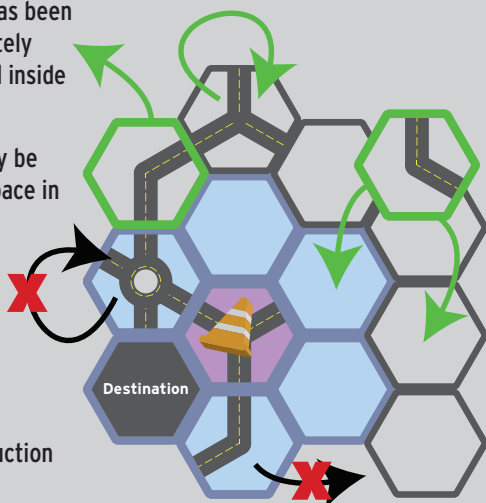
The player who set up the Construction Zone is also affected by it. Spaces outside the Construction Zone are unaffected by its presence, and all regular actions are available to players.

The construction cone may be played on any space on the board, including intersections, empty spaces, destinations, tunnels, parks, and waterways. If a construction cone is already in play on a space, it must first be removed before it can be placed again. This means moving a construction cone from one space to another effectively costs two separate actions during a Build turn.

Driving is also affected by the Construction Zone by causing additional delays. If a car crosses a construction cone during a driving turn, it must stop at the cone. Note that only the space with the cone is affected by this stop, and the spaces surrounding the cone may be driven through as usual.

Additional Rules

Would you like your Gridlock with *more confusion and frustration*? If so, then one or more of these additional rules may be added to the base rules upon agreement of all players at the beginning of the game. We recommend that you play with the base rule set before adding any of these during play.

Quick Trip

This simplified version of Gridlock tends to go more quickly, and it is best used when playing with *two players*, or when playing with *very young players*. The game setup and the first turn remain the same as in the base rules, and the win condition is still the same. However, in this variant, you can *build and drive on the same turn*.

During gameplay, each player may take up to *three* actions of any of the following type, in any order:

- *Place* an intersection tile from their hand.

- *Rotate* an intersection tile on the board.

- *Remove* an intersection tile on the board, unless it has a car on it.

- *Drive* any distance for a single stop. If the player stops on a destination from their hand, they place a marker cube and turn over the corresponding destination card.

At the end of their turn, each player draws back up to two intersection tiles.

Note that the construction cones are not used in this variant, but they can be added back in with the same rules as the base game for an additional challenge.

The Places You'll Go

For a longer game, travel to seven places instead of six: do not place a marker cube on your starting place and draw six additional cards instead of five at the start of the game. For a shorter game, draw only four cards. All other rules remain in effect as before with either case.

Congestion

Popular destinations are harder to drive through. Once a destination has *at least two marker cubes* on it, the space counts as a *mandatory stop* during a driving turn, regardless of whether the player holds that destination or not. If a congested destination also has a construction cone, it counts as a single stop.

Traffic

There are too many cars on the road! While driving, if a player crosses *another player's car* on any space, that space counts as a *mandatory stop* regardless of the type of space. If the affected traffic space also has a construction cone, it counts as a single stop.

I'm Special And The Rules Don't Apply To Me

In this variation, each color car has its own special ability that none of the other colors share. These abilities are active at all times.

Blue: Duck boat. The duck boat can use all of the water spaces as fully connected drivable tiles, as if they were destination spaces. The player can enter and exit from any side of the space as long as it's connected to a roadway or destination tile.

Green: Park ranger. The park ranger can drive through the green park tiles in the middle of the board: Boston Common and Public Garden. The player can enter and exit from any side of the spaces as long as it's connected to a roadway or destination tile.

Red: Emergency services. The emergency vehicle doesn't have to stop at construction, congestion, or traffic, anywhere on the board. The player must still stop in a destination space for it to count as a point.

Yellow: Construction vehicle. This car acts as a construction cone for other players, creating a Construction Zone around whatever space the car is currently in. However, the rules of the Construction Zone do not apply to this player. Construction Zones created by construction cones still function normally.