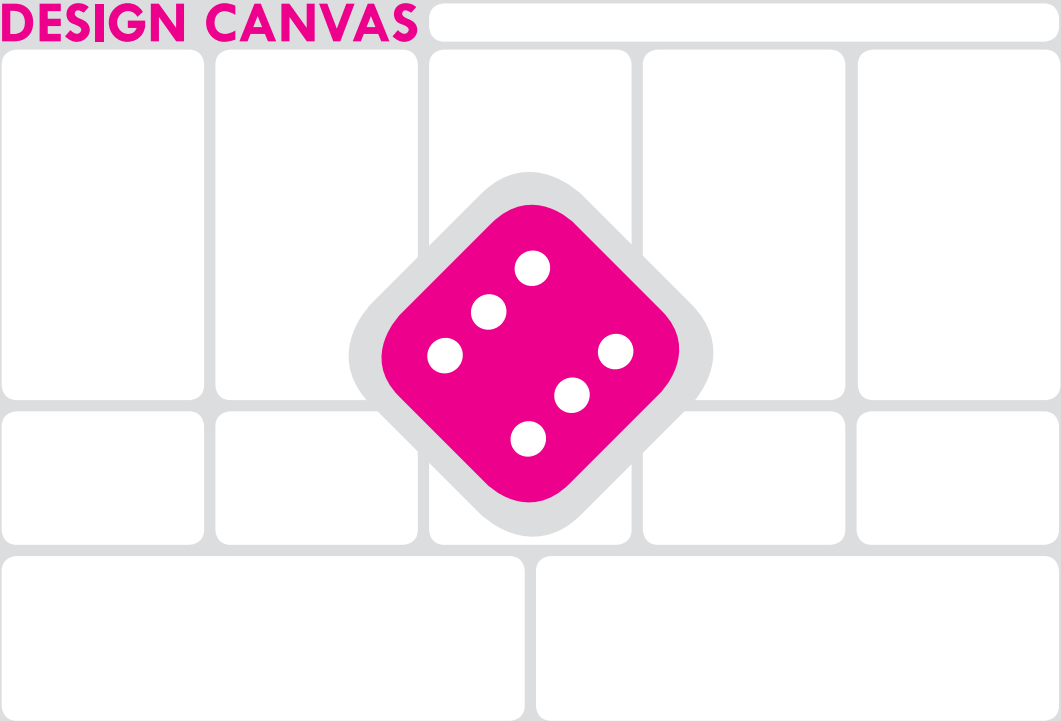


BOARD GAME DESIGN CANVAS

VERSION 1.0
2024



BOARD GAME DESIGN CANVAS

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

The Board Game Design Canvas is a one-page modeling tool for Designers to visualize, assess, and refine their ideas. It emphasizes core design elements like customer problems, solutions, players, and mechanics. The Board Game Design Canvas was developed to simplify the game design process, enabling designers to quickly validate ideas. It encourages adaptability and prioritizes rapid decision-making over lengthy, traditional planning processes, and fosters clarity, agility, and innovation for beginners and established designers alike.

This canvas was inspired by the Business Model Canvas by Alexander Osterwalder and the Lean Business Model Canvas by Ash Maurya.

The Board Game Design Canvas is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0. You are encouraged to iterate on its design and tweak it to fit to your personal needs and preferences.

THE AUTHOR Dr. Christian A. Bachmann is an award-winning researcher, academic publisher, and curator. He taught literature, comics, and publishing practice at universities in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. Most recently, he taught as a substitute professor of Game Design & Development at Macromedia University, Berlin.



BOARD GAME DESIGN CANVAS

PROJECT TITLE

DATE

(CUSTOMER'S) PROBLEM



SOLUTION



THEME



WHAT PLAYERS DO



PLAYER SEGMENTS



THE GAME'S CORE VALUES

HOW THIS GAME IS FUN

EXISTING ALTERNATIVES



HOW THE GAME ENDS



HOW PLAYERS AFFECT OUTCOMES



RESSOURCES



RULES & MECHANICS



ASSETS



BOARD GAME DESIGN CANVAS

PROJECT TITLE

DATE

(CUSTOMER'S) PROBLEM



When working for a customer, precisely define which economical, educational, etc. goals they want to reach.

When working without a customer, define what goals (if any) you want to reach with your game.

Creating a fun experience should always be a goal.

SOLUTION



Define how you reach the goals defined in the (Customer's) Problem statement.

THE GAME'S CORE VALUES

Outline the underlying values transported by your game, i.e. cooperation, friendship, competition, etc.

THEME



Describe the theme that best serves the solution to the customer's problem while also fitting in with the players' goals defined in HOW THE GAME ENDS. If existing alternatives were defined, a different theme may separate your game from an existing one.

WHAT PLAYERS DO



Describe what actions players perform on their turns.

HOW THIS GAME IS FUN

Note how this game evokes fun experiences through the actions players perform. Test for this!

PLAYER SEGMENTS



Depending on their individual interest and play styles, players may experience games differently: describe which segment of players your game targets primarily.

EXISTING ALTERNATIVES



Research available ways to solve the problem stated above. This may include existing games, other media, or products.

HOW THE GAME ENDS



Define the goal(s) that players must achieve to finish the game, i.e. play a set number of rounds, score the most victory points, play all cards, etc.

HOW PLAYERS AFFECT OUTCOMES



Describe how the actions players take affect the ultimate outcome of the game.

RESSOURCES



List all in-game resources (such as workers, re-roll tokens, money, etc.) at the players' disposal.

RULES & MECHANICS



Define the basic mechanics and rules in generic terms, e.g. 'dice rolling', 'take that', 'set collection'.

ASSETS



List and briefly describe the physical material necessary for the game: dice, cards, playing pieces, etc.

BOARD GAME DESIGN CANVAS

PROJECT TITLE

THE LANDLORD'S GAME (EXAMPLE)

DATE 1924

(CUSTOMER'S) PROBLEM



- Educate the American people on capitalism and its risks
- Show how foreign landownership hurts Americans

SOLUTION



Make players experience the effects of capitalism by observing how the odds favor those who hoard or acquire resources

THE GAME'S CORE VALUES

- compassion!
- competition
- greed

THEME



The American Metropolis (New York City grid and street names), also rural places, frontier, poorhouse; parts are foreign-owned (English).

Usability issue: city grid must not obscure path!

WHAT PLAYERS DO



Players roll 2d6 and move their tokens on the board according to the eyes rolled. Players exchange resources (money) for land (resource), pay "rent" or "taxes," etc. depending on the space they land on; sometimes players draw chance cards

HOW THIS GAME IS FUN

players outcompete each other in collecting resources that they take from the bank or each other. Hurting others to win is fun!

PLAYER SEGMENTS



competitive players who enjoy resource management and clash over limited and scarce resources

Gamers (players enjoying chance games)

Families?
Labor background?

EXISTING ALTERNATIVES



books & pamphlets, classes, public talks; no relevant game

HOW THE GAME ENDS



player with the most money wins (1) after all players have completed 2 rounds or (2) when any player breaks the bank

HOW PLAYERS AFFECT OUTCOMES



players decide if to buy/sell properties, if to build houses; players decide if to work or speculate (at cost of rent)

RESSOURCES



- 40 houses
- 21 deeds
- 18 share
- x money

RULES & MECHANICS



roll and move, take that, resource management; spaces on the game board are colored, and different rules apply to each type; pieces move clockwise

ASSETS



square cardboard board (ca. 40x40 cm), 2 d6, 5 wooden tokens in different colors, 40 wooden houses, 73 cards (16 "idle land," 18 "shares," 21 "deeds," 18 event cards), 4x10 "wage checks," money (\$1, \$5, \$10, \$50, \$100)

test for amount!