

# The Terrain Game

Designed by Gary R. Winfield

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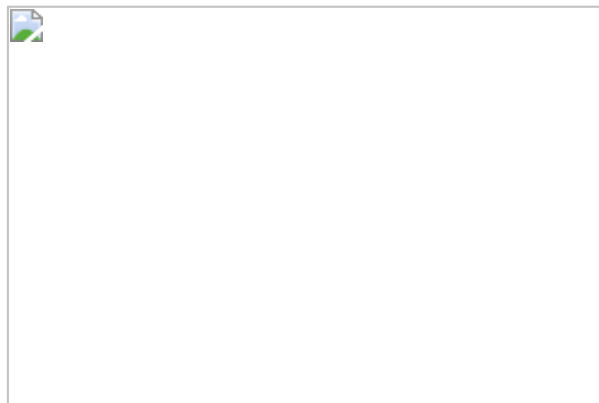
Reviewed by Ken Tidwell

\$80 (£50)

2-6 players

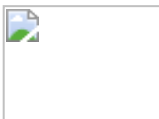
60 mins

**The Terrain Game** is a fairly simple, abstract game with mountain climbing (and building!) serving as a thin veneer of theme. Basically, The Terrain Game is the game that **Linie 1/Streetcar** wanted to be but fell far short. The players first cooperate to construct the board then they race across it trying to collect a set of flags that have been placed (post construction) by their opponents.



The board itself is amazing. It is made up of 96 wooden hexagons of 8 different heights. These are 96 fairly hefty hunks o' wood, mind you, ranging in heights from an inch to about three inches, say. During the first phase of the game the players take turns placing the hexagons in a larger wooden hexagon which serves as the bounds of the overall board. The players are constructing a terrain across which they will later race.

The race is conducted in a fairly random manner - roll two six-sided dice then move. One die determines the number of movement points for that turn and the other determines the weather. Naturally enough, movement points go farther in good weather than in bad - twice as far, in fact. Moving between two hexagons of the same height costs one movement point in good weather and two in bad. Each level of descent costs one extra point in good weather and two in bad. Ascent also has a basic cost of one point per level but has an additional charge of one point, no matter how many levels are involved. There is also an overall restriction that you can neither ascend nor descend more than three levels in a single move. Further complicating matters, only three of the six sides of each hexagon are passable!



All of the players are aware of the starting points of their opponents during the board construction phase. The goal is to construct terrain that will be more passable and quicker to traverse going in the direction that you need to move in than it will be for your opponent moving in the direction they need to go in. Once the board is constructed your opponents will place the flags that mark your goals. If you are clever you will have constructed a nasty canyon in which to hide your opponent's flags! Or maybe you'll go for an impassable ridge line. Or a vertigo inducing cliff. Or maybe just a long line of bumpy foothills.

And, despite being a 'roll the dice and move' sort of affair, the race is quite good. I kept running myself down ratholes where I couldn't climb down and couldn't go back the way I came. Luckily, when you roll doubles you can rotate one hexagon - either to let yourself out of a trap or to build one for your opponent!

I recommend **The Terrain Game** as a nice blend of path building and race games that makes for a good couple of hours of fun.

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