PACAL'S ROCKET

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for 2 to 5 players from 8 years upwards, Piatnik Game No. 634192

Graphics: Massimiliano Longo • © 2015 Piatnik, Vienna • Printed in Austria

— RULES —

In the ancient Maya city of Palenque, a mystery-shrouded tombstone has been the focus of controversy ever since it was discovered. Does it really depict an astronaut in a spaceship? Could it be that aliens built the Maya pyramids? Pacal's Rocket is based on this myth. With the help of your spaceship, you build pyramids in the city once ruled by Pacal the Great (603-683 AD). With a clever strategy you can gain control of the city.

Purpose of the game:

The purpose of the game is to win the most points by building pyramids in the city's various districts.

Equipment:

1 board:
The board shows the city of Palenque, which is divided into 16 districts (with different point values), a river and a lake. The surround of the board consists of the points track.

5 spaceships:
Their holds are hollow to store energy stones.

15 god stones:
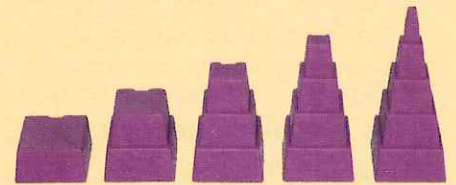5 each with the values 2, 4 and 6.

55 triangular energy stones:
11 in each of the five colours.

55 pyramids:
In each colour there are 11 pyramids, as follows:
1 x 1-storey
3 x 2-storey
3 x 3- storey
2 x 4- storey
2 x 5- storey

5 combination cards

3 cover pieces:
For making the playing area smaller.

1 die.

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Preparations:

- Place the board in the middle of the table.
- Each player chooses a colour and receives the following (in the chosen colour):
  - All the energy stones and pyramids – the player then puts one energy stone on the first field of the points track.
  - 1 spaceship
  - 3 god stones, one each with the value 2, 4 and 6
  - 1 combination card.
- The player who is chosen to start takes the die. The game proceeds in a clockwise direction.
- Beginning with the first player, the players take turns to place their space ships on a square of their choice in the Sacred District (with the value 7) in the middle of the board.

- **Important:** With fewer than 5 players, the board is reduced in size by covering one or more districts with the cover pieces, as follows:

  2 players: place the cover pieces 2 and 2/3 on the board as shown in the illustration:

  3 players: use cover piece 2/3

  4 players: use cover piece 4.
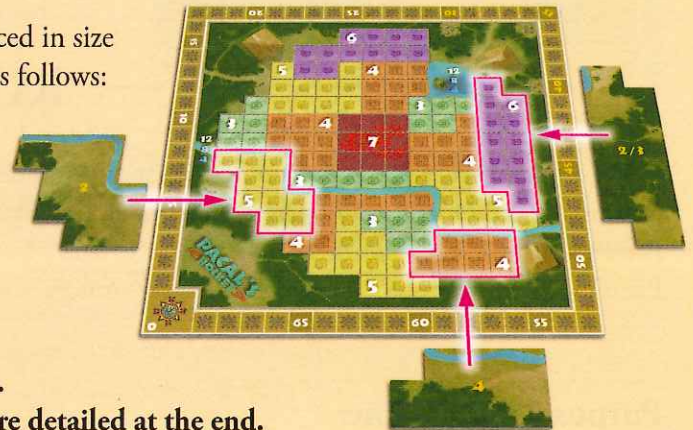
**The rules given here apply to the game for 3 to 5 players.
Special rules for the game for 2 players and for experts are detailed at the end.**

Play:

- The first player throws the die and places it – with the number or symbol on top – on his or her combination card. In this way the players can always see who has last thrown the die, which is necessary because the throw applies to ALL the players. They all play in turn, and only then does the next player throw the die, and again everybody plays accordingly.
  Note: The first player in a given round will always be the last player in the next round. This can play a decisive role later in the building of pyramids.
- A player's turn consists of the following actions (in the order given):
  1. Move the spaceship (required)
  2. Load energy stone(s)
  3. Build a pyramid
  4. Collect points
- When a player has finished the above actions, it is the turn of the player to his or her left.

The actions 1 to 4:

1. Move the spaceship

The player whose turn it is must move his or her spaceship in accordance with the die throw. The spaceship is lifted up so that the energy stones it may contain stay on the square on which the spaceship was standing. The spaceship can be moved in the following ways:

If a number is thrown, the player can choose between the following options:

- **Moving the spaceship in a straight line in one direction only (no turning corners!).**
  Moving forward and then back again is not allowed, nor is moving diagonally.
  If a spaceship encounters an obstacle (another spaceship, the edge of the board,
  the lake or a pyramid), it must stop on the square before the obstacle, and the
  unused points it could have moved are lost. Energy stones do not count as obstacles,
  and spaceships can go over them.

  A player who chooses this option can then activate <u>2 energy stones</u> (see Action 2 below)

- **Turning at right angles any number of times.**
  In this case the player must move his or her spaceship the number of squares indicated
  by the die throw. The spaceship does not stop before an obstacle but must go round it.
  Dead end rule: If a player moves his or her spaceship onto a square which is partially
  enclosed by three obstacles, the spaceship must stop there, and the remaining squares
  the player could have moved are lost.

  A player who chooses this option can then activate <u>only 1 energy stone</u> (see Action 2 below)

If the die shows the arrows symbol, the following rules apply:

The player can move his or her spaceship any number of squares along the vertical or horizontal row
on which it is standing, but only <u>in 1 direction</u>. Moving forward and then back again is not allowed.
Obstacles can be ignored – the spaceship simply jumps them.

The player can then activate <u>2 energy stones</u> (see Action 2 below).

Instead of moving, the player can use one of his god stones.

After doing so, the god stone is out of the game. The player can then move
his or her spaceship onto any vacant square on the board. In this case the
player can again activate <u>only 1 energy stone</u> (see Action 2 below).
Note: At the end of the game, unused god stones are worth 2, 4 or 6 additional points.
Caution: It can happen that a spaceship is completely encircled by obstacles, so that the player cannot move it. In this
case he or she must use a god stone. If (and only if) the player has no more god stones can he or she move the space-
ship to any vacant square on the board but cannot activate an energy stone (see Action 2 below).

As a general rule:

- In the first round every player must leave the Sacred District in a straight line. Right-angle turns are possible only
  from the second round onwards.
- A spaceship can land on a square which contains one or more energy stones.

2. Activating energy stones

Regardless of how a player has moved his or her spaceship, that player can
- **Either** activate 2 energy stones. The player puts one inside his or her spaceship and one in any other player's spaceship;
- **Or** activate only 1 energy stone, putting it inside his or her own spaceship.

On any given square there can be only 1 energy stone per colour, so the players must remember on what squares they
put their energy stones in their spaceships. When a spaceship is moved, the energy stones it contains stay on the square
it was standing on. If it should happen that there are two energy stones of the same colour on the same square, both
stones are removed and given back to the player they belong to. That player can use them again in a later turn.

A player can also waive the right to activate any stones.

If it is a player's turn and he or she has no more energy stones to activate, that player can pick up his or her own
stones from the board (provided they are not covered by a spaceship) and immediately use them again elsewhere.

3. Building pyramids

As soon as a player's energy stones become visible in accordance with one of the patterns, that player can build 1 pyramid, as follows:

- **A 1-storey pyramid** with 1 energy stone.
- **A two-storey pyramid** with two vertically or horizontally <u>adjacent</u> energy stones. The pyramid cannot be built if the energy stones are diagonally adjacent or if there are one or more vacant squares between the stones.
- **A 3-storey pyramid** with 3 energy stones in a row, whether vertical, horizontal or diagonal. Gaps of one or more vacant squares between the stones are allowed as long as the number of vacant squares is the same in each gap.
- **A 4-storey pyramid** with 4 energy stones in a row, whether vertical, horizontal or diagonal. Gaps of one or more vacant squares between the stones are allowed as long as the number of vacant squares is the same in each gap.
- **A 5-storey pyramid** for 4 energy stones making up a square. Here too, gaps between the stones are allowed as long as the number of vacant squares is the same in each gap.
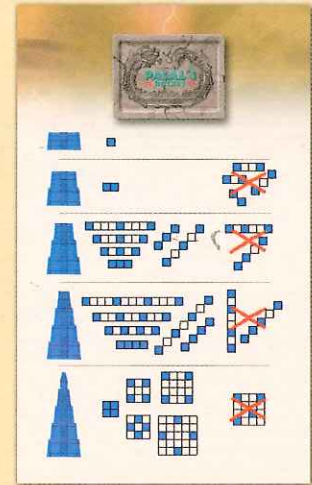
The combination card shows the possible pattern combinations.

### The following rules govern the building of pyramids:

- The player can choose on which square of a pattern to build a pyramid.
  He or she places the pyramid on one of the squares containing an energy stone which is part of the pattern. Then the player removes the energy stones from the pattern and places them in front of him or herself for possible later use.
- If the player chooses to build a pyramid on a square also occupied by energy stones in other colours, these stones are removed and returned to the players they belong to.

Example: The player with the colour green wants to build a pyramid. If he or she builds on A or B, only the 3 green energy stones are removed. But building on C would mean that the yellow and blue stones are also removed.

A   B   C
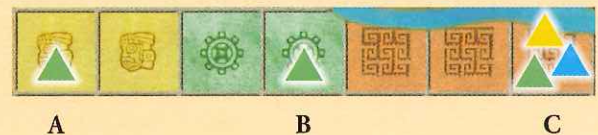
- In building a new pyramid, a player can also make use of one or more of his or her own pyramids as if they were energy stones. However, when the new pyramid has been built, the existing pyramids used are not removed, as energy stones are, but are left where they are on the board. It is important to remember that the pattern must contain at least one energy stone, because a new pyramid can only be built on a square containing an energy stone.

Example: The player with the colour mauve wants to build a new pyramid. The existing 2-storey pyramid is included in the pattern. The player can build a new 4-storey pyramid on A, B or D.

A   B   C   D   A   B   C   D
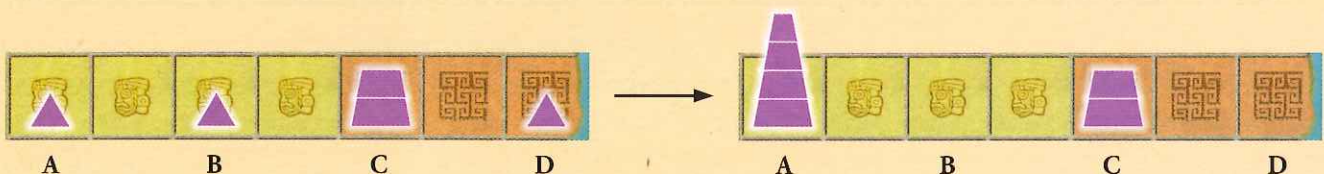
- Pyramids can be upgraded by replacing them with a higher pyramid. This requires a valid pattern with the number needed for the new pyramid height. The pattern can again include one or more existing pyramids, but it must contain at least one energy stone, which is removed after the upgrade.

Example: The player with the colour mauve wants to upgrade his or her 2-storey pyramid on square C. The pattern of four means that the existing pyramid can be replaced with either a 3-storey or a 4-storey pyramid. If the player decides to build a 4-storey pyramid, then all the energy stones in the pattern have to be removed. If the player builds a 3-storey pyramid, then the energy stone on A or D can be left on the board because building a 3-storey pyramid requires only 3 energy stones.
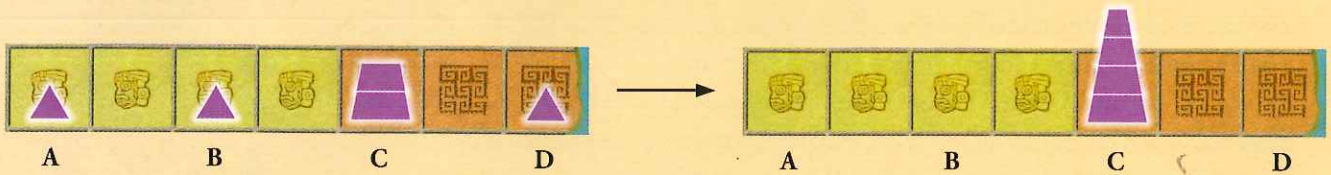
- Even if a player has a valid pattern on the board, he or she does **not** have to build a pyramid.
- In the course of a single turn a player can build **only 1 pyramid**.
- If a player runs out of a certain size of pyramid, he or she can build a lower pyramid (if available).

4. Collect points

Immediately after building a pyramid, a player scores points provided that:
- **Either** he or she is the first to build a pyramid in that district
- **Or** he or she becomes the leading player in that district in terms of the total amount of pyramid storeys owned.

A player who meets one of the above requirements can move his or her energy stone on the points track the number of squares equivalent to the value of the district.

Note: If a player is already the leading player in a district and builds a further pyramid, that player does not win points because points are awarded only for **taking over the lead** in a district. However, if it happens that two or more players share the lead in a district and one of them builds an additional pyramid, then that player is awarded points for gaining the sole lead.

End of the game

The game ends when:
- **Either** a player builds his or her last-but-one pyramid. In this case the game is over immediately, and the player concerned is awarded 5 bonus points, that is, he or she can advance 5 squares on the points track.
- **Or** one of the players reaches a given points total on the points track as follows: with 3 players: 40 points; with 4 players 35 points; with 5 players 30 points. In this case the other players up to the end of the round have their turn. There are no bonus points unless a player manages to build his or her last-but-one pyramid.
  Then this player collects the 5 bonus points and can move 5 squares on the points track. The game is then over.

Final points tally:

First all the spaceships and energy stones are removed from the board (but not from the points track!) because they have no points value.
Then the points tally proceeds as follows:

- **Points for river and lake:**
  This relates to the areas enclosed in black on the illustration. After the pyramid storeys are counted up, points are awarded as follows: first place: 12 points; second place: 8 points; third place: 4 points. The players move the corresponding number of squares on the points track. If there is a tie, the points for that place and the place below are added together and half each awarded to both players.

  Example: Yellow has built pyramids with a total of 8 storeys on the lake. Mauve and Green each have 6 storeys. Yellow wins 12 points for first place. Mauve and Green share 8 +4 = 12 points for places 2 and 3: that is, they each win 6 points.
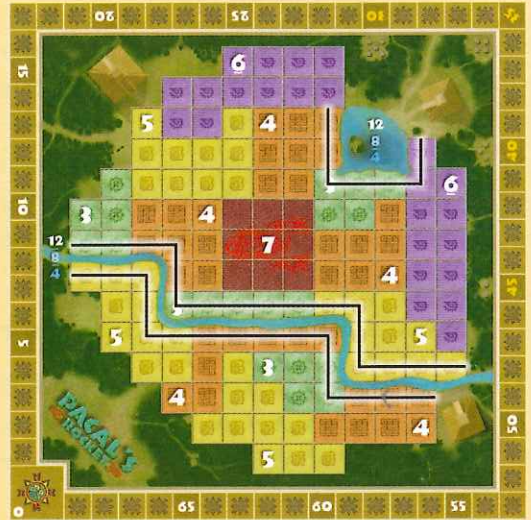
- **Points for the various districts:**
  In the districts points are awarded only for first and second places. The player with the most pyramid storeys in a given district can advance the number of squares on the points track corresponding to the value of the district. The player in second place can advance 2 squares.
  If two or more players tie for first place, these players can advance the number of squares on the points track corresponding to the value of the district. In this case there are no points for second place.
  If two or more players are tied for second place, all the players concerned can advance two squares.
  Note: It is easier to keep track of the points tally if the pyramids are removed from the board once they have been counted.

- **Points for the god stones:**
  Each player receives points for his or her unused god stones (valued at 2, 4 and 6 points), advancing on the points track by the appropriate number of squares.

The player whose stone is furthest forward on the points track at the end of the points tally wins the game.

Rules for 2 players:

The rules are as above with the following exception:
The players take turns to throw the die just **for themselves** (that is, the throw does not apply to the opponent).
The game ends when a player reaches 45 on the points track followed by the tallying of scores.

Rules for experts:

The rules are as above with the following additional challenge:
New pyramids can be built with patterns consisting **only** of energy stones, that is, not including existing pyramids.
Exception: A player may use **one** of his or her own existing pyramids provided that pyramid is upgraded to a higher pyramid.