Grzegorz Rejchtman

Ubongo

Sprint to Solve the Puzzle
For 1-4 Players, Ages 8 Years and Up

Play it smart
Learn how to play the game!

Would you like to watch a tutorial to learn how to play this game instead of reading the rules? If so, you can learn to play the game by downloading the free *Play It Smart App*. Look for the *Play It Smart Leaflet* included with this game. In the leaflet you will find out which devices support the app and how to download it and get started. The app also offers a variable timer, a solution aid, and a solo game timer.

Game Overview

Each player receives one set of 12 tiles. At the beginning of each round, each player also receives a new puzzle board. The task to be completed on each puzzle board is determined by rolling the die; immediately afterward, the hourglass is turned over. All players simultaneously try to place a predetermined set of tiles on the light-colored placement area of their puzzle boards in such a way that the area is completely covered. Each player who can complete his or her task before the hourglass runs out shouts "Ubongo!" and takes a gem from the bag — the two fastest players also receive a bonus gem from the game round track.
You win if, after 9 rounds, you have the most valuable gem collection.

Game Components

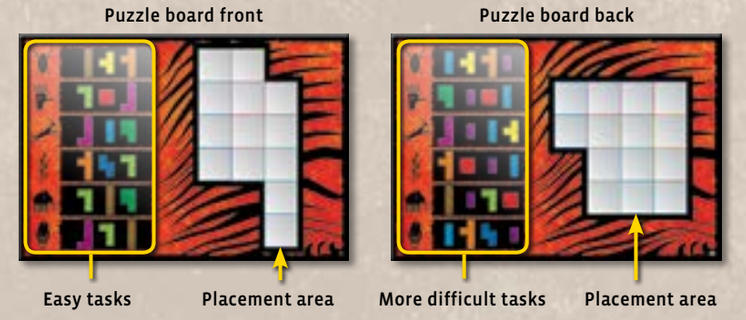
4x12 Tiles
36 Puzzle boards (with 432 different puzzles)
1 Die
1 Hourglass
1 Cloth bag
1 Game round track
58 Gems:
19 Sapphires (blue)
19 Ambers (brown)
10 Rubies (red)
10 Emeralds (green)



Before your first game, put all of the gems into the cloth bag.

Preparation

- Take the **36 puzzle boards** from the box. There are two levels of difficulty: one side of the puzzle boards shows the **easy tasks**, which only require **three tiles each**. The other side shows the **more difficult tasks**, which require **four tiles each**. For your first game, we recommend that you use the easy tasks with only three tiles. Turn all puzzle boards so that the tasks with three tiles are face down and place them as a **stack** in **the center of the table**, because the tasks you will complete must initially be concealed.



- Each player receives a set of **12 different tiles**, one of each color.
  In a game of fewer than four players, put the tiles that are not needed back into the box.
- Place the game round track in the center of the table.
- Take **nine sapphires (blue)** and **nine ambers (brown)** from the bag containing the gems. Put these gems into the corresponding **holes of the game round track**. These 18 gems are the **rewards** and, at the same time, the **round counter**.
  The gems have **different values**:
  Red = 4 Points, Blue = 3 Points, Green = 2 Points, Brown = 1 Points.
  You win if, at the end of the game, you have collected the most valuable gems.
- Place the **hourglass** and the **die** on the table.

Sequence of Play

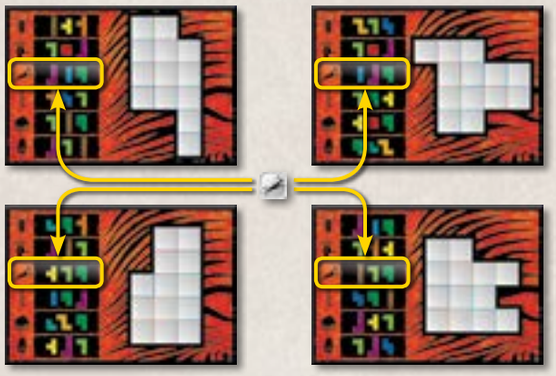
The game lasts **nine rounds**.

Round Sequence

- **Each player** takes a puzzle board from the stack and places it in front of himself or herself. Turn your puzzle board over, so that you can see the tasks requiring three tiles.
- Now the youngest player rolls the **die** and flips the **hourglass**. The **symbol rolled** indicates **which task** the players must complete as fast as possible.

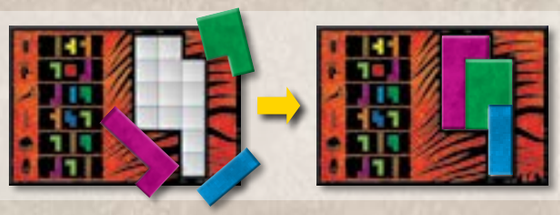
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Example:



- **Each player** takes a look at his or her own puzzle board and, from his or her supply of 12 **tiles**, selects the tiles shown next to the **symbol rolled,** as fast as he or she can.
- As soon as you have found the required tiles, you try to **fit the tiles exactly** into the light-colored placement area of your **puzzle board**. This means that the area must be covered completely — the tiles may not protrude laterally. To this end, you may **rotate** and **flip** the tiles over.

Example:



- As soon as one of the players has completed his or her task, he or she shouts **"Ubongo!"**
- The other players continue trying to complete their tasks before the hourglass runs out.
- As soon as one of the players notices that the hourglass has run out, he or she shouts **"Stop,"** and all players must immediately stop.

Second-Chance Round

The **hourglass has run out** and **nobody** was able to complete his or her task? In this case, a second-chance round takes place. **Flip the hourglass again** and continue trying to cover your placement area.
If the **previous situation repeats** — i.e., nobody can cover his or her placement area before the hourglass runs out again — the **round comes to an end.**

Rewards

Each player who completed his or her task receives a reward:

1. The fastest player to fit the tiles exactly into his or her placement area and shout "Ubongo!" takes **one blue sapphire** from the game round track. In addition, he or she randomly takes **one gem from the bag.**
2. The second fastest player receives **one brown amber** from the game round track. **In addition**, he or she randomly takes **one gem from the bag.**
3. The third fastest player randomly takes **one gem from the bag.**
4. The fourth fastest player randomly takes **one gem from the bag.**



Regrettably, all players who couldn't completely cover their placement areas before the hourglass ran out get nothing in this round.

End of the Round

The rows of nine sapphires and nine ambers also serve as a round counter.
At the end of each round, the rows must **contain exactly one blue sapphire and one brown amber fewer** than when the round started.
However, it may happen that only one or none of the players completes his or her task before the hourglass runs out, in which case the **number of gems on the track** must be **reduced accordingly** at the end of the round.
If **only one player** was able to fit the tiles exactly into his or her placement area, the brown amber representing this round **must be removed** and tossed into the bag.
If **none of the players** were able to complete the task, **both the blue sapphire and the brown amber representing this round are removed** and **tossed into the bag.**
At the end of the round, put all of the **puzzle boards used in the round** on the top of a shared **discard pile.**

New Round

Each player takes **a new puzzle board** from the unused stack.
The players **take turns** rolling the die and flipping the hourglass at the start of each round. The die is rolled and the hourglass is flipped by the player **to the left** of the player who rolled the die in the previous round.

End of the Game

The game ends **after nine rounds** — that is, when no more gems are left on the game round track.
Each player adds up the **values of the gems he or she has collected.**
You win the game if you have the **most points.**
If various players tie for the highest score, a "playoff" takes place. Each tying player takes a puzzle board. One of the players rolls the die. The hourglass is not used. The first player to complete the task wins the whole game!

Example:
At the end of the game, one of the players has one red ruby, one blue sapphire, three green emeralds, and three brown ambers. Therefore, he has earned
*1 x 4 + 1 x 3 + 3 x 2 + 3 x 1 = **16 points***



Solo Variant

If you want to play Ubongo by yourself, you need a **clock or stopwatch.**
Note: The *Play Smarter* app also includes a solo game timer!
Try to complete **as many tasks as possible** within **five (or 10, or 20) minutes.**
Another solo variant consists in measuring the time you need to complete five (or 10, or 20) tasks.
If you get stuck in your task, you can put it aside and draw a new puzzle board.
Write your results down and try to establish a new record each time you play.

Game Designer:
Grzegorz Rejchtman, born in 1970 in Poland, lives in Monaco. A computer science and economics graduate, he prefers games that are fast to learn, communicative, and fun. He has published many games in Scandinavia and worldwide. Grzegorz Rejchtman and KOSMOS thank all of the play-testers and all the people who reviewed the game rules.

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