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BREAK THE CODE™



Game Rules

Will you break the code before your opponents?

Ask the **best questions**, and be the first player to **decipher the code** to win!

2 **pages 3 to 5**

3-4 **pages 6 to 8**

Overview and Goal of the Game

In a game of **Break the Code**, your goal is to guess the numbers and colors of unknown Cipher tiles. There are 6 Question cards in the middle of the table. On your turn, choose one card and ask a question to an opponent to learn more about the unknown Cipher tiles. Be the first player to correctly deduce the code to win the game.

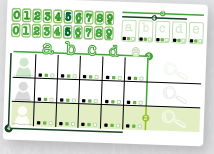
Game Components



1 Rule booklet



4 Screens



1 Notepad



21 Question cards



20 Cipher tiles

Component Details

Screens

Players hide their Cipher tiles behind their screen. Screens also provide a reminder of the setup and a list of possible actions.

Question cards

All Question cards are different. On each of them, you can read a question about the tiles' value, color, or relative position. Asking questions will allow you to get information about the other players' tiles.

Notepad

Distribute one sheet to each player at game start. Use it to keep track of your progress, and to note down the clues that you collected.

2 players: only use the bottom line.
3 players: only use the top 2 lines.
4 players: use all 3 lines, but don't use column E.

The 20 figures in the upper left section may be used when taking notes.

The 5 empty spaces in the upper right section are reserved for your final answer (3- or 4- player game).

Cipher tiles

There are **20 Cipher tiles**. There is one white copy and one black copy of each number (0 to 9), except for the 5 (both copies are green).

Setup

1. Distribute a **Screen** to each player. Each player places their screen in front of them.
2. Shuffle the **20 Cipher tiles** and deal 5 tiles to each player, face down. Each player must now place these tiles face up, **behind** their screen, so that no one else can see them. When receiving your tiles, make sure to place them **in ascending order**, from left to right. If two tiles have the same number, **place the tile with the black number first**, on the left of the second tile with the white number. Place all remaining tiles back in the box.
3. Distribute one **sheet** from the notepad and a **pencil** to each player.
4. Shuffle the **Question cards** and form a draw pile in the middle of the table.
5. Draw the first 6 cards and place them face up in the middle of the table.
6. Randomly choose the **1st player**.



Gameplay

In a 2-player game, the game plays in a succession of turns and ends when one of the two players correctly announces the 5 tiles hidden **behind the screen of their opponent**. On your turn, you may either **Ask a Question** or **Guess the Tiles**.

A. Ask a Question

You can choose one question among the 6 available cards.

1. Take the card of your choice and read it aloud.
2. Your opponent must answer honestly, using the corresponding letters of their screen to answer your question.
3. Note your opponent's answers on your sheet.
4. Then, discard your Question card and replace it with the top card from the draw pile (if any remain). If there are no more cards available in the middle of the table, the game ends.
5. It is now your opponent's turn.

Examples:

Where are your #5 tiles?

If your opponent has a #5 tile, they must use the letters of their screen to tell you where it is – here, "I have a 5 on c."

a	b	c	d	e
2	2	5	8	9



Where are your #1 or #2 tiles?

If you ask this question, you must first decide whether you're asking for #1 or #2 tiles.

Here, if you ask for #2 tiles, your opponent would answer "I have a 2 on a."

a	b	c	d	e
2	3	4	6	9

Which neighboring tiles have the same color?

If you have at least two neighboring tiles with the same color, then you must tell where they are. If there are several groups, you must distinguish them.

Here, you would say «Tiles on a and b have the same color ; and tiles on c, d and e have the same color»

a	b	c	d	e
2	3	4	6	9

Which neighboring tiles have consecutive numbers

If you have at least two neighboring tiles with consecutive numbers, then you must tell where they are. If there are several groups, you must distinguish them.

Here, you would say «Tiles on a, b and c have consecutive numbers ; and tiles on d and e also have consecutive numbers.»

a	b	c	d	e
2	3	4	8	9

B. Guess the Tiles

In a 2-player game, you must identify the Cipher tiles hidden **behind your opponent's screen**.

If you think that you can correctly identify the 5 Cipher tiles, then you can try to **Guess the Tiles**, instead of **Asking a Question**. In this case, announce the 5 Cipher tiles **out loud**, from left to right.

For each tile, you must announce its number and its color. Your opponent waits until you've announced all tiles, then they tell you whether you're correct or not. Your opponent does not tell you how many tiles were correct, nor do they tell which numbers or colors were correct.

If you're correct:

If you were the starting player of the game, your opponent may immediately try to guess your tiles before the game ends. If they do so and correctly guess your tiles, the game ends in a tie. If they're wrong, you win the game.

If you're wrong:

Your turn ends, but you remain in the game. Your opponent may now play their turn, choosing between the two options: Ask a question, or Guess the tiles.

Example:

You announce your guess that your opponent's tiles are: 3 4 5 7 9

However the correct tiles are: 3 4 5 7 9

There is one slight mistake, which means that you're wrong: the 4 was black and you announced it as white. Your opponent does not give any detail – they simply tell you that you're wrong.

End of the Game

As soon as one player **correctly** guesses **all** of their opponent's tiles, that player wins the game. If both players correctly guess their opponent's tiles in the same turn, the game ends in a tie.

3- OR 4- PLAYER GAME

The following paragraphs only address the differences from a 2-player game. All game paragraphs that are not described below are the same as in a **2-PLAYER GAME**, regardless of the number of players.

Goal of the Game

In a 3 or 4 player game, your goal is to guess the tiles that are in the **middle** of the table.

Setup

2. Shuffle the **20 Cipher tiles** and deal them to all players according to the attached chart. Each player must now place these tiles face up behind their **Screen**, so that no one else can see them. When receiving your tiles, make sure to place them **in ascending order** from left to right. If two tiles have the same number, **place the tile with the black number first** on the left of the second tile with the white number. Then, check the chart to know how many extra tiles are placed face down on the table.

These face down tiles may not be looked at until a guess is made, and then only by the guessing player (see Gameplay, next page).

Number of players	3	4
Cipher tiles received by each player	5	4
Cipher tiles placed face down on the table	5	4



Gameplay

In a 3- or 4-player game, the game plays in a succession of turns and ends when one of the players correctly announces the tiles that are face-down in the **middle of the table** (the "central tiles"). The game also ends when all players are out of the game, or if all questions have been asked.

A. Ask a Question

3 players: take any available Question card and read it aloud. The two other players must answer honestly, according to their tiles. Then, the player on your left plays their turn.

4 players: Take any available Question card and read it aloud. All players, **including you,** must answer the question. Then, the player on your left takes their turn.

B. Guess the Tiles

In a 3- or 4- player game, you must identify the central Cipher tiles.

If you think that you can correctly announce the central Cipher tiles, then you can try to **Guess the Tiles** instead of **Asking a Question**.

In that case, write your answer on your sheet, in the reserved upper right corner, from left to right, and in ascending order. For each Tile, you must write its number and its color. Then, check the central tiles and compare them with your answer. Don't tell anyone anything about the tiles' numbers or colors, or about what you correctly guessed.

If you're correct:

Announce out loud "I got it!" without adding anything. You're now out of the game, but you must still answer your opponents' questions. Whatever happens, you'll be one of the winners – maybe the only one?

If you're wrong:

You're out of the game, and you lose. You must still answer your opponents' questions. The player on your left takes their turn.

***Note**: in 3- or 4- player games, you can only guess once. Don't rush it!*

When a player correctly identifies the tiles, all players complete the current round if necessary (so that every player has the same number of turns), then the game ends. If all players are out of the game because they all failed to identify the central tiles, the game also ends.

***Note** : In Break the Code, you always ask questions to get information about your opponent's tiles. However, in a 2-player game, your goal is to guess your opponent's tiles, while in a 3- or 4-player game, your goal is to rule them out to deduce the central tiles.*

End of the Game

The game ends as soon as one player correctly identifies the central tiles, provided that every player played the same number of turns. All players who correctly guessed the central tiles win. The game also ends if all players provided a wrong answer when trying to identify the central tiles, or if all Question cards have been used. In both cases, there is no winner.

If you end the game on a tie… play again!

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